

R. E. Spear

Official Report of Congress on Union of Churches



Melbourne,
August 31st to September 4th, 1913.

Congress on Union of Churches.

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appointed to take steps to give effect to the Proposals adopted in the Congress.

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Report to Congress on Union of Churches.

COMMISSION No. 2.

"THE STANDARDISATION OF COLLEGE CURRICULA, AND THE POSSIBILITY OF COMBINED THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION."

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The Commission on "The Standardisation of the College Curricula and the possibility of combined Theological Education" beg to report as follows:—

An inquiry into the state of matters at present existing as regards Theological Education in Victoria elicited information, the main points of which are tabulated in the attached Statement, marked "A."

Having considered this state of matters, the Commission were of opinion that a good deal might be done to raise the standard of Theological Education and unite the forces available towards this end by adopting such a system of co-operation in Theological Education as has been adopted with success in Montreal by the Theological Colleges of the Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational Churches there. Such practical unification of educational forces in regard to matters about which there is general agreement among the denominations could be effected, as has been done in Montreal, with the sanction and approval of the churches concerned without raising the wider and more difficult question of an incorporating union of those churches. The Commission unanimously adopted the following practical suggestions as their report to the Congress.—

1. There seems to be no reason why there might not be common teaching in many subjects, as has been arranged between the four colleges—Wesleyan, Anglican, Presbyterian, and Congregational—affiliated with McGill University, Montreal, and as is at present in operation between the Methodist and Congregational Colleges in Victoria.

2. Subjects in which there might be such common teaching are as follows:—

1. *Old Testament*—(a) Language, and (b) Literature.
2. *New Testament*—(a) Language, and (b) Literature.
3. Patristics.
4. Church History—(a) Ancient, (b) Mediæval.
5. Biblical Theology and Introduction.
6. Historical Theology or History of Doctrine.
7. Philosophy of Religion and Apologetics.

8. Comparative Study of Religion.
9. Homiletics.
10. Christian Ethics and Sociology.
11. Christian Missions.
12. Paideutics.
13. Elocution.

Leaving over for separate treatment in the separate colleges, such topics as:—

1. Modern Church History.
2. Ecclesiastical Polity.
3. Symbolics (or the Study of the Creeds).
4. Pastoral Theology.
5. Liturgics.

3. As sufficient class room accommodation is lacking in the various colleges it would be very desirable, if a plan of co-operation were agreed upon, that steps should be taken as soon as possible to get a common hall erected, in which the common lectures might be given, as is being done in Montreal.

4. In connection with such a central Union Hall, with at least two class rooms and ante rooms for the lecturers, a two years' course of theological study might be arranged for, working up to the standard of the B.D. and Diploma examinations of the Melbourne College of Divinity, and the Australian College of Theology.

5. This common teaching might, perhaps, be provided and managed by a Board of Management and a Senate representing the Churches and Colleges concerned, to be constituted as may afterwards be agreed.

6. If the above proposal regarding the erection of a hall be found practicable, the authorities of the affiliated colleges might be approached with a view to obtaining a building site, if possible, within their grounds.

7. In the meantime, the Council of Ormond College might be approached with a view to securing temporary accommodation for the common classes there.

8. Some agreement would need to be come to—

1. As to standard to be attained to before admitting to attend the common lectures at the Hall, and how the examination for entrance into the Union Hall was to be conducted.
2. As to the time when lectures would begin, when close, and what vacations would be given.

9. The following Time Table is appended, not as authoritative or final, but merely by way of showing how a scheme of common lectures might be carried out with the existing staffs of the colleges, while yet leaving room and time for extra subjects to be dealt with at the various denominational colleges.

D. S. ADAM,
Chairman of Commission.

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGES IN VICTORIA.

TOPICS.

1. Accommodation.

PRESBYTERIAN.

Three class rooms at Ormond College, capable of accommodating fifty to one hundred each, with ante-rooms for the professors, together with the Wysekirk Hall, which can accommodate several hundred. Ormond College has room for twenty resident students. Of these at present only ten or twelve are studying for the ministry, half doing arts and half theology.

Twenty-eight are doing theology in Hall at present, of whom only five are resident.

2. No. of Students.

About forty between Arts and Theology and forty-two Home Missionaries in out districts doing the Preparatory Course.

3. Financial Aid to Students.

Scholarship fund for undergraduates, £16,250. For Theological Students, £12,000. (Home Mission Students get salaries.)

4. Financial Resources of Theol. Hall.

Endowments of about £48,176. Congregational collection about £300 per annum.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

At Trinity Col. are twelve residents doing arts and theology. At St. John's Col., St. Kilda, room for 18. At Witley Col., Sydney-road, room for 16. At Sale (Preparatory Hostel) room for 6. At Bendigo—10 in Theol. Hall, 12 in Districts—22. Wangaratta, St. Columba's Hall, 12. Ballarat, St. Aidan's, 18.

About one hundred in all Victoria connected with the various Halls and doing work in Districts.

Helped when necessary by Diocesan Funds.

Fees of Students, Diocesan Funds, Voluntary Subscriptions.

METHODIST.

At Queen's College there are at present 22 resident students preparing for the ministry, of whom about 14 are doing either Junior or Middle or University work, and 8 are doing Theology pure and simple, with a view to the Diploma or B.D. exams. of the Melbourne Col. of Divinity. the largest class room accommodation 18.

22 resident and one of two non-resident, besides those who have passed through the college and are doing their 4 years' probation with exams.

Students pay what they can towards fees (£53 per session), the rest is made up by Theological Hall Committee.

Endowments, Fees of students paid by Theological Hall Committee, Levy of 1/2 per cent. on circuit incomes.

CONGREGATIONAL.

A room in connection with the Hall of the Independent Church, Collins-street, capable of holding 18, is at the disposal of the Theological Hall.

1 attending lectures in Hall.
12 extra-mural students whose studies are aided by correspondence.

Students get £5 per month while attending college (besides preaching fees in vacation).

£200 per annum from endowment, £800 per annum from church collections, £400 per annum guaranteed for 5 years for Principal.

BAPTIST.

Principal's House and several class rooms, the largest of which would accommodate 30. 3 Houses to be fitted up shortly for resident students. Property is at foot of Gatehouse-street, Parkville.

10 Students,
11 from Victoria, South Wales, New South Wales,
2 from South Australia,
1 from Tasmania.

Students are paid £1 per week while attending classes, and university fees are also paid for them.

Endowment of £30,000 for salaries of staff and support of students. Property worth £4000 for lecture rooms and residences. Congregational collections.

5. Date of Session.	Opens 2nd Tuesday of March. Closing exams. 2nd week of September. Vacation 15th to 30th May.	The three institutions in Melbourne keep the university terms.	Begins after 2nd Sunday in April, ends about middle of November, with university vacations.	From first week in March to last week in October.
6. Conditions of Entrance to Hall.	Graduation at University and entrance exam. in Hebrew and Scripture, or entrance Exam. in Greek, Mental and Moral Phils., Hebrew, English and History for Home Missionaries; Hebrew is optional; Home Missionaries have a four years' preparatory course before entering).	For entrance to Trinity Col. matriculation, no special entrance exam. for Theology. For other colleges entrance is at the discretion of Bishop and Warden. Clippis and Bendigo have a common entrance exam. for Ridley College.	The man must have been accepted as candidate for the ministry by the Methodist Conference after examination in English, History, Arithmetic, Geography, and General Knowledge.	Entrance exam., including English, History, Geography, and one mathematical subject from the Junior Public Exam. Matriculation for University candidates for entrance exam.
7. Curriculum.	A three years' course in Theology, including Hebrew, Greek, Ch. History, Theology, Apologetics, English Bible, Pseudepist., and Ecclesiast. and Homiletics. Three hours per week given to work of these except elocution and Homiletics) qualify for B.D. or Diploma of Theology.	A two years' course in Theology in preparation for the Th.L. Diploma of the Austral. Ch. of Theology, which is in 2 parts, including Old Testament and New Testament in English. A Gospel and Acts in Greek Early Church History. The 31 articles and various optional subjects, such as Social Science and I. Criticism, Patristics, Psychology and Ethics, Compar. Religion, etc.	Aim at a 3 years course in Queen's, but many do only 2 years. The course is that prescribed for the Diploma of the Melbourne College of Divinity.	A 4 years' course in Arts Theology, with examinations annually. Aim at qualifying for Diploma of Melbourne College of Divinity.
8. Staff.	Profs. Rentoul, Adam and Skepe, Rev. J. Barnum and Mr. H. Ross.	Dr. Leeper. The Dean of Melbourne, Canon Hart, Canon Godby. Rev. Dr. I. Bennett. Rev. G. E. Aickin.	Rev. E. H. Sugden. " F. J. Nance Harcourt. " Mr. M. Morris.	Rev. W. H. Holdsworth, A. R. Stephens, W. D. Macgregor, A. S. Devenish, F. V. Pratt.

UNION THEOLOGICAL HALL, PARKVILLE.

TWO YEARS' COURSE OF COMMON LECTURES.

ROOM A.

		CLASS B.				
DAY.	9 to 10 a. m.	10 to 11 a. m.	11 to 12 a. m.	9 to 10 a. m.	10 to 11 a. m.	11 to 12 a. m.
Tuesday.	1st Ch. History. Ancient. Prof. Adam.	1st Greek. Dr. Leeper. or other Anglican.	1st Hebrew. Mr. Nance.	2d Greek. Prof. Rentoul.	History of Doctrine. Prof. Adam.	2d Hebrew. Prof. Skene.
Wednesday.	1st Apologetic. Prof. Rentoul.	O. T. Intro- duction. Mr. Sugden.	Patristics. Prof. Alekhu.	N. T. Introduction. Mr. Holdsworth.	2d Ch. History, medieval and Reformation. Principal Betts.	Biblical Theology. Mr. McLaren or Principal Betts.
Thursday.	1st Church History. Prof. Adam.	1st Greek. Dr. Leeper, or other Anglican.	1st Hebrew. Mr. Nance.	2d Greek. Prof. Rentoul.	History of Doctrine. Prof. Adam.	2d Hebrew. Prof. Skene.
Friday.	1st Apologetic. Prof. Rentoul.	O. T. Intro- duction. Mr. Sugden.	Patristics. Prof. Alekhu.	N. T. Introduction. Mr. Holdsworth.	2d Ch. History, medieval and Reformation. Principal Betts.	Ancient History. Mr. Sugden.
Saturday.	Psalms. Mr. Barnaby.	Homiletics. Prof. Skene and Principal Betts.	Exegetics. Mr. H. Ross.	Christian Ethics. Mr. Holdsworth.	Christian Missions. Mr. Pratt.	Liturgics. Dean Stephen or other Anglican.

"UNION CONTROL OF HOME MISSIONS."

Rev. John Barnaby, M.A., B.D.	Rev. L. E. Tranter
Rev. D. A. Cameron	Mr. Jas. Birtchnell
Rev. R. Ditterich	Mr. John Downing
Rev. J. H. Goble	Mr. Chris. Flinn
Rev. A. T. Holden, B.A.	Mr. J. B. Howie
Rev. R. J. E. Hayman	Mr. A. J. Johnson
Rev. Canon Hancock, M.A.	Mr. W. W. Kerr
Rev. J. W. Jones	Dr. J. R. Lee
Rev. H. T. Langley	Mr. W. B. McCutcheon
Rev. G. J. Mackay	Mr. E. C. Rigby
Rev. Leyton Richards, M.A.	Mr. H. E. Wootton
Rev. Geo. Tait, M.A.	

This Commission is charged with the consideration of the question of the Union Control of Home Missions. It is composed of members of the six Churches, namely—Anglican, Baptist, Churches of Christ, Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian. Evidence has been taken in respect to all of these, except the Churches of Ohrist.

I. The first and most obvious fact which emerges from the evidence submitted is the existence of serious overlapping, and it is this fact which constitutes the problem with which the Commission has had to deal. Of the seriousness of overlapping, and of its extent, in the light of the evidence, there can be no doubt. In the words of one who gave evidence—

"As a result of ten years' constant travelling through Victoria, in the course of my work, I have no hesitation in expressing my opinion that there is, in quite a number of districts, serious overlapping. Frequently there are three Home Missionaries, each heavily endowed from the Home Mission Funds of his Church, and one, or at the most two, could do all the work with the utmost ease."

"I have one district now in my mind where there are only 55 Protestant families scattered over a wide area, but where there are three Home Missionaries. Over £100 per annum of Home Mission money is paid by the respective denominations to keep these three men, and each is inadequately remunerated even then. One man could easily do the work, be better paid, be supported wholly by the Station, and a large sum of money would be released for much needed work where the population is greater."

In ascertaining and estimating the amount of overlapping in any given district, regard must be had not merely to the actual number of existing Churches, or facilities for worship; but these facilities must be reckoned in relation to—(1) The population of the districts served; (2) the extent of territory comprised in the district; (3) the numerical strength within the district of each denomination represented, with especial reference to the relative numbers of Protestants and Roman Catholics; and (4) the location within the district of the several Churches or facilities for worship.

Judged by these canons, the existence of overlapping is indubitable; it constitutes a problem of the most serious order, and is a reproach which the Churches are bound in honour to efface, if possible means can be devised.

II. Not only is overlapping the obvious fact of the situation, but the evidence also reveals this further fact, that the present methods of Church extension in every one of the reporting denominations, of necessity tend to the increase and encouragement of overlapping. An acknowledged bane of Home Mission work in a large number of districts

served is the existence of acute denominational competition. This is not the fault of any one denomination, so long as the present system of distinct and separate Home Mission agencies is in vogue. The efforts of each Church are naturally directed to extending the Kingdom of God in and through an extension of denominational activities, often in unseemly rivalry with those already existing, or with others similarly pushing forward. The world is apt to conclude that the Churches are bent rather on fighting each other than combining to fight the devil.

III. The admitted evils thus indicated would obviously best be remedied by the organic union of the Churches (or of such Churches as are willing to enter into such an arrangement), but this Commission is charged rather with indicating an immediate and practicable remedy for the present faulty methods of Home Mission propaganda than with outlining a completed ideal of Ecclesiastical unity.

IV. The Commission therefore unanimously suggests as a feasible and practical step towards "Union control of Home Missions," that a Committee be officially constituted by the contracting Churches; this Committee to have advisory powers only, but the contracting Churches to pledge themselves, before undertaking isolated action, to refer to this Committee all proposals for denominational extension, and all questions relating to overlapping and co-operation. In effect, this would be an Advisory Committee to which there would be compulsory reference in relation to—(a) The establishment of new causes and their geographical position in the locality selected; (b) the remedying of overlapping by the distribution wherever practicable of present Home Mission agents, and the amalgamation under one roof of the co-operating congregations.

Evidence was led to show that there might be difficulty in inducing the adherents of one denomination in any given Home Mission district to merge themselves within the borders of the co-operating denomination where such merging was the condition of joint action.

The Commission therefore draws attention to a plan adopted with success in the United States of America, where a similar problem exists, and similar difficulties have arisen. Where the members of denomination "A" are prepared to enter into full relationship with denomination "B," the difficulty does not exist, and the solution is described as "Federal"; but where objection is raised to such a Federal plan, the alternative is what is called the "Co-operative plan," by which members of denomination "A" (for the purposes of this illustration extinguished in a given locality to remedy overlapping) retain their denominational membership in the nearest Church of their own faith and order, and yet enter into a fellowship with the Church of denomination "B" in their locality. In this way a distinction is drawn between membership and fellowship; all are in united fellowship locally, without surrendering their denominational membership. To quote a report of "The Men and Religion Movement" in America—"There is no more difficulty in this co-operative plan than there is in the same persons being at once members of a Church and members of the Y.M.C.A." Delegates under such a plan could be sent from the co-operative Church to any denominational gathering, and thus denominational cohesion would be preserved.

The Commission is aware that this plan has its difficulties—what plan, indeed, has not?—but with an earnest desire to meet these difficulties in the interests of Christ's Kingdom, they ought not to be insuperable. It is to be noted that this proposal would not lead to the erection of a separate organisation in any given locality, but only to the concentration of existing Christian forces in and through some or other of the Churches already established.

V. To give effect to such a process, the Commission is unanimous in recommending that the Congress shall empower a Council of its members to draw up a Constitution for the formation of such an Advisory Committee as it recommends, and to set forth its powers; such Constitution to

be thereafter submitted for approval and adoption to the various Church Courts.

Without wishing to bias this Council in the exercise of its judgment, the Commission believes that the Advisory Committee would stand upon the most satisfactory footing if its membership were proportionate to the strength of the contracting Churches.

VI. In presenting the above recommendations, the Commission believes that the plan outlined, if adopted, will greatly increase the aggressive power of the Church as a whole; it will in no wise impair or dissipate the present energy, often ineffectively directed in denominational channels; the proposal aims at harnessing this energy to more effective methods.

In view of all the evidence presented, and after a careful survey of the Home Mission field of Victoria in all its denominational aspects, the Commission is strongly of opinion that the best interests of the Kingdom of God will be served, and that the spiritual needs of the State will best be supplied by this practical essay in federation. At the same time the Commission is fully aware that the facts which have come under its purview constitute but part of a larger and more inclusive problem, and in issuing this report it does so with the fervent and prayerful hope that the "Union control of Home Missions" may prove to be a stage in the fulfilment of the Master's prayer for the unity of His disciples.

LEYTON RICHARDS, Chairman.

APPENDIX.

Specimen cases of the evils of overlapping and competitive extension:—

1. A small town mainly dependent on mining, which has fluctuated and is declining, has seven Protestant churches, with six resident ministers; two of the churches of one denomination within gunshot of each other, and two of another denomination only separated by the width of a street.

2. A small town, agricultural, stationary or declining, offering few inducements to young persons to remain in it, has six Protestant places of worship open at the same hour, with a resident minister of each, and a Salvation Army Barracks of sufficient capacity to hold the majority of worshippers in all the churches.

3. A remote town, agricultural, small population, stationary; the church that began with the first settlers was followed by other churches, until there were not less than seven places of worship, and now there are five, and five resident ministers. A lamentably small proportion of the people attend church.

4. A place of less than 500 people, with seven churches.

5. Many spots having a population ranging from a score up to 250 have two and three places of worship open at the same hours.

6. A town, once a flourishing mining centre, now mainly dependent on Government institutions (lunatic asylum, gaol, etc.), has seven places of worship and six resident ministers, and still other Christian agencies.

7. New areas, thinly peopled, in which two, three, or four churches strive to be first on the ground, and compete for congregations.

8. Localities where a Home Mission has laboured for years, expending much money and devoted service, by which means have been slowly gathered congregations that approached or reached self-support, and have then been entered by another Home Mission, dividing the people, and throwing back the prospect of self-support for an indefinite period.

9. A belated little municipality of nominally 900 scattered people, with three or four evangelical churches open at the same time, and a neighbouring township with less people and as many churches.

COMMISSION No. 3.

"THE DIFFICULTIES AND POSSIBILITIES OF ORGANIC UNION."

Rev. Prof. Adam, M.A., B.D.	Hon. Jas. Balfour
Rev. A. E. Albiston, M.A.	Mr. Jas. Birchnell
Rev. Ernest Davies	Mr. J. N. Barker
Rev. W. H. Fitchett, B.A., LL.D.	Mr. R. Beckett
Rev. Canon Godby, M.A.	Mr. L. V. Biggs
Rev. Canon Hart, M.A.	Mr. J. M. Campbell
Rev. W. H. Holdsworth, M.A.	Mr. F. J. Cato
Rev. F. E. Harry	Mr. W. C. Craigie
Rev. Canon Hughes, B.A.	Mr. J. Downing
Rev. A. C. Kellaway, M.A.	Mr. E. C. De Garis
Rev. J. C. Martin	Mr. F. G. Dunn
Rev. W. Morley, D.D.	Mr. W. H. G. Ellingworth
Rev. P. J. Murdoch, M.A.	Mr. R. Ennis
Rev. F. H. L. Paton, M.A., B.D.	Mr. R. Campbell Edwards
Rev. F. V. Pratt, M.A.	Mr. C. M. Holmes
Rev. David Ross, M.A.	Mr. A. J. Johnson
Rev. F. C. Spurr	Principal Main, M.A.
Very Rev. Dean Stephen, M.A.	Mr. H. S. Martin, B.A., LL.B.
Rev. W. T. C. Storrs, M.A.	Mr. W. B. McCutcheon
Rev. Geo. Tait, M.A.	Mr. A. C. Rankine
Rev. Hy. Worrall	Mr. H. E. Wootton

The Commission began their work by calling on the representatives of each Church to meet apart and prepare a statement showing what they believed their Church would regard as essential to Union in respect of—(1) Doctrine, (2) Polity, (3) other matters, including legal. These Denominational Committees discharged their task promptly, and their Reports are here set down as they were presented. It will be observed that no legal difficulties are discussed. That is not because there are none. The Commission are well aware that such difficulties exist; but they are confident that, should other obstacles in the way of Union be surmounted, these would not be permitted to prevail.

STATEMENTS SUBMITTED BY DENOMINATIONAL COMMITTEES OF THE COMMISSION, BEING WHAT THEY BELIEVE THEIR RESPECTIVE CHURCHES WOULD REQUIRE IN RESPECT OF DOCTRINE AND POLITY AS ESSENTIAL TO UNION.

ANGLICAN.

The Anglican members of Commission No. 3 have agreed to submit as the conditions necessary for reunion the resolutions of the Lambeth Conference of 1888. The following Articles supply a basis on which an approach may be by God's blessing made towards Home Reunion:—

- A. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as "containing all things necessary to salvation," and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith.
- B. The Apostles' Creed as the Baptismal Symbol; and the Nicene Creed, as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith.
- C. The two Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord—ministered with unfailing use of Christ's words of Institution, and of the elements ordained by Him.
- D. The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the Unity of His Church.

The only Article that seems to call for further remark is the last. With regard to the Historic Episcopate, though the phrase is not explained in the

Lambeth Resolutions, we are of opinion that it does not imply the autocratic power of the Episcopate as exercised in administration, for this is not always found in history; but it has reference to the fact that wherever the Episcopate has been found, during the last sixteen centuries at least, it has been regarded as indispensable for ordinations, whether with or without the co-operation of presbyters.

BAPTIST

The Committee met on May 26th, and carefully considered the three questions propounded by the Commission.

They beg to report as follows:—

The Committee desires, first of all, to express its fullest sympathy with the objects of the proposed Congress. It believes that the movement towards Church Union is one that should be fostered in every way. It rejoices in the fact that already, in many ways, *practical* union is already accomplished. The Churches entertain the kindest feelings for each other, and each becomes a common platform for the enunciation of those things which are common to the whole Church of Christ. The Committee heartily believes in the principle of Federation. It considers that the entire Church would gain if the present overlapping of Churches and the present duplication of educational agencies could be reduced, so that the greatest possible efficiency in Christian service might be secured. The Committee considers it advisable that the lesser question of Federation should first of all be proceeded with, on the ground of practicability. At the same time it recognises that the ultimate goal of endeavour is complete Church Union.

In offering a statement of what it believes our Baptist Churches would regard as essential to union, the Committee emphatically states, at the outset, that its opinion is purely personal, and in no way official. The Baptist Churches, by reason of their Congregational polity, have no one hard and fast doctrine concerning many questions of belief and practice. The mother idea of Congregationalism is that of the liberty of each separate Church. Hence, amongst us, there are found men of various minds who view such matters as doctrine and particular Church order and worship, in different ways. It is not likely, therefore, that upon all the points offered for our consideration there would be entire unity of judgment. The Committee, therefore, keeping this in mind, records only certain general principles which it believes would be accepted by the majority of Baptists. The exceptions will be noted at the proper time.

(1) WITH REGARD TO DOCTRINE.—The Baptist Churches have, strictly speaking, no creed, in the sense of possessing a symbol such as the Apostles' Creed, or the Nicene Creed, or the Athanasian Creed. The most various judgments prevail amongst us concerning the Descent into Hades, the precise meaning of the Resurrection of the body, and the metaphysical statements concerning God and our Lord Jesus Christ, which are found in the Athanasian Creed. The *facts* set forth in the Creeds would be accepted by all Baptists.

Yet while this is so, the Baptist Union of Victoria possesses in its Constitution a doctrinal basis which is a true indication of the general belief held by Baptists. This basis is as follows:—

DOCTRINAL BASIS.

1. The Divine inspiration and supreme authority of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.
2. The existence of One God in Three persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.
3. The Deity and Incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God, the second Person in the Holy Trinity.
4. The fallen, sinful and lost estate of all mankind.

5. The salvation of men from the penal consequences and the power of sin through the perfect obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ, His atoning Death, His resurrection from the Dead, His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and His unchanging Priesthood.
6. The immediate work of the Holy Spirit in the regeneration of men, in their sanctification, and in their preservation to the Heavenly Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.
7. The necessity, in order to salvation, of repentance towards God, and of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
8. The resurrection of the Dead, and final judgment of all men by the Lord Jesus Christ.
9. The two ordinances of the Lord Jesus Christ, namely, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, which are of perpetual obligation: Baptism being the immersion of believers upon the profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and a symbol of the fellowship of the regenerate in His death, burial, and resurrection; the Lord's Supper being a memorial, until He come, of the sacrifice of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This basis is common to all Evangelical Churches, with the exception of item No. 9, which defines Baptism as "the immersion of believers upon the profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." This one thing distinguishes Baptists from other Evangelical Churches. The Committee would point out the following facts:—

1. That Baptists are in total agreement with the rest of the Evangelical Churches in all essential matters of faith and spiritual life.
2. That what distinguishes them from the other Churches is not primarily the mode of administering the Sacrament of Baptism (since immersion is recognised by most scholars as having been the Apostolic mode of administering the rite; and immersion is actually practised by the Greek Church, while it is allowed by the Anglican Church). The one point upon which Baptists insist is that as the Sacrament of Holy Communion is administered only to intelligent believers, so the twin Sacrament of Baptism should be administered only to believers. The age at which it is administered is an unimportant matter.
3. This attitude of Baptists in no way unchurches other Christians. Baptists recognise that spiritual life and the Sacraments, while often related, are, in fact, separable and separate.
4. Certain of our Churches are what is called "close," that is, no person is admitted to membership who has not been baptised as a believer. Other of our Churches are what is called "open," that is, while the baptism of believers only is recognised as valid baptism, yet the absence of such baptism is no hindrance to Church fellowship. Those who believe in open membership regard baptism purely as a personal matter, and not as a rite admitting to the Church. In the view of these, the Church should be open to all Christian people.
5. At present, Baptists are by no means united in opinion concerning this matter. Some hold firmly to the "close" idea of membership; Others, such as the late Dr. MacLaren, Dr. F. B. Meyer, Dr. Clifford, Dr. Brown, and many more steadfastly advocate the "open" view. The Committee feels that at present to press this matter would be unwise. It believes, however, that in the growing light of Christian union this difficulty may be surmounted. It can readily believe that Churches other than Baptist may have to reconsider the entire question of this sacrament, while our own Churches will be called upon to reconsider their attitude towards their brethren. The Committee frankly states the present position, and it asks that charity from others which it devoutly desires for itself and for the Churches of our order. The difficulties, then, upon the point of doctrine are by no means insurmountable.

2. IN RESPECT OF POLITY.—The Churches of our order are Congregational. The Committee, however, feel it right to say that this polity is not a fixed one. Indeed, there is a widespread desire amongst us to see a serious modification of the Congregational principle. Many of our leaders perceive the weakness of a system of isolated Churches, each of which pursues its own course. While not entitled to speak with authority on this matter, the Committee believes that some other Church polity, approximating more nearly to the Connexional or Presbyterian, would be welcome to a growing number amongst our people. The Committee therefore anticipates no difficulty whatever in the way of Church Union on the ground of Church Polity.

3. IN RESPECT OF LEGAL DIFFICULTIES.—Here the Committee feels that the difficulties are the greatest. The various properties and funds held in trust by the Victorian Baptist Union and the Victorian Baptist Fund are subject to the by-laws of the Baptist Union. These by-laws stipulate that the property of the Union and the Funds of the Union shall be devoted to specific Baptist work.

For example, the constitution of the Baptist College of Victoria has for its object:

2. The training of Students for the Ministry of the Gospel, in connection with the Baptist Denomination.

While No. 4 of the Constitution provides that—

The College shall be governed by a Committee of twelve persons, six of them to be appointed annually by the Trustees of the Victorian Baptist Fund, partly from their own number, and six (one of whom shall be the President of the College) to be elected annually by the Assembly of the Baptist Union of Victoria, at the Annual Session thereof.

The largest fund in connection with the denomination is the Victorian Baptist Fund. In the deed of gift it is expressly provided that the money shall be used for work in the Baptist denomination. While concerning the appointment of trustees it is provided that—

1. Any Trustee of the Victorian Baptist Fund shall be deemed to have vacated his office for any of the following causes, viz., refusal, unfitness, or incapacity to act, resignation of office, withdrawal from or ceasing to be an adherent of the Baptist denomination, insolvency, arranging or compounding with his creditors, removal to such a distance from Melbourne as (in the opinion of his co-trustees) to render it inexpedient for him to remain a Trustee, absence from Victoria for more than six months without leave from the Trustees.

Thus legally the difficulties are great. But they are not greater with us than with the other Churches. In any complete scheme of Church Union there must be, of necessity, an appeal made to the Courts or to Parliament respecting the redistribution of properties and funds. There is no need, therefore, for us to discuss our own particular case, since it is part of the larger question. The Committee feels that only when the time is ready for complete Church union can the legal aspects of the matter be fully discussed.

To sum up—The Committee expresses its entire sympathy with the movement for the Union of the Churches. It feels that Almighty God is calling His people to a new consciousness of their oneness with Himself and with each other. And although at present the difficulties in the way of consummating such a union appear to be very great, yet we believe that with the continued exercise of prayer and charity, the end will one day be attained. Meanwhile the Committee once again urges that the nearer and lesser question of federation should be considered, since this lies within the region of practicability. And in this secondary work, as in the primary, it believes that Baptists will be ready to co-operate with their brethren in Christ of the other Churches.

This statement is purely personal and in no way binds the denomination as a whole.

AMENDED STATEMENT OF BAPTIST COMMISSION UPON POINTS REFERRED
BACK.

The Baptist Committee beg to report as follows upon the matters remitted to it for reconsideration. The points emphasised were:—

- (a) The Relation of the Baptist and the Presbyterian Churches with regard to Baptism.
- (b) The Relation of the Baptist and Anglican Churches with regard to Church Polity, the Historic Episcopate, and Baptism.
- (c) The Relation of the Baptist and Methodist Churches with regard to Doctrine and Baptism.

With regard to (a) (b) and (c) as regards Baptism. The Committee think they are warranted in saying that our people, generally, would be prepared to leave the question of Baptism quite open—for each person to decide according to his conscience—and not to make it a test of Church membership. That is to say, in the interests of a great movement towards unity, they, on their part, would not make Baptism a test question one way or another. While firmly believing that the Baptism of intelligent believers in Christ is the best safeguard of Spiritual Church membership, inasmuch as the candidate of his own will yields to the yoke of Christ, yet they believe that the majority of Baptists would consider the question of the Unity of the Churches to be the major question, hence they would be willing (it is believed) so to adjust themselves to new situation, as to cease to demand the immersion of intelligent believers as a sine qua non of Church membership. They could not surrender the truth of believer's baptism, yet they would be prepared to admit the broader basis of Church membership. They feel that in so doing a way is opened for union between themselves and those Churches which admit the necessity of a fuller expression of spiritual life than that which the rite of infant baptism suggests. They would point out that those Churches which practise infant baptism demand a further rite before persons are admitted to the full fellowship of the Church (e.g., the Anglican service of Confirmation). They would respectfully suggest that if (what seems to them to be) the exaggerated claim on behalf of infant baptism could be modified, so as to express the ideas of the dedication of the child to the service of God, and the dedication of the parents to their duty, as Christian guardians and educators of the child, a great step would be taken in the direction of unity.

They would point out once more that their own practice does seem to them to safeguard the spirituality of the Church. The goal they thus set before themselves is precisely that which all the Churches aim at. If, on their part, they are willing to come into line with the other Churches, so far as the abandonment of an exclusive attitude towards Church membership is concerned, is it too much to ask those Churches which practise infant baptism to so reconsider their position as (while guarding the ideas of infant and parental dedication) to throw greater emphasis upon that later personal dedication to Christ which the Baptist rite expresses? An approach from both sides simultaneously would remove the present difficulty.

With regard to (b). Baptists are not committed to any particular Church polity. They are at present Congregationalists, but it is right to say that general dissatisfaction exists in this regard. We are looking round to find a better method of Church polity: a method that shall destroy the present isolation of individual Churches and also provide for such discipline as is found in the Anglican and Presbyterian Churches. If a modified Episcopacy or Presbyterianism should offer what is desired, Baptists are quite open to accept whichever seems the better.

As to the Historic Episcopate. Before committing ourselves to an opinion upon this matter, it is felt that the term should be more carefully defined. Baptists feel they could not surrender their deep conviction, that the validity of the Christian ministry is justified by its spiritual re-

sults rather than by any mere official ordination. At the same time, they recognise that the Church is a historic body and has a historic ministry, and that its historic unity must be preserved. They ask for a clearer statement as to what is involved in the acceptance of the Historic Episcopate.

CHURCH OF CHRIST

The desirability of Christian Union is affirmed, and, as requested, the following is submitted as an outline of the doctrine and polity which the representatives of the Churches of Christ consider as being essential to Christian Union:—

It is agreed that the most important statement in regard to Union is that recorded in the Seventeenth Chapter of John, in which we have recorded our Lord's prayer for the unity of His people. It is thought, however, that this great prayer has only received partial consideration, attention being centred on one portion of it to the neglect of the others. It has scarcely been sufficiently emphasised that the Unity for which Christ prayed was the result of something which preceded it. Briefly stated, the sequence of thought is as follows:—

1. Sanctification or consecration in the truth.
2. As resulting from this, a unity similar to that subsisting between the Father and the Son. And,
3. As a further result, the conviction produced in the minds of the people of the world that Jesus was the Sent of God. This gives us a trinity of thought which may be expressed in three words—(1) Truth, (2) Unity, and (3) Belief. From these considerations it seems beyond controversy that agreement in regard to the Truth is essential to unity, and, therefore, it is upon Truth that we are to place the emphasis, because the relation between Truth and Unity is that of cause and effect. Agreement as to Truth means Unity. It is upon those lines that the present Commission is proceeding, inasmuch as the first step taken is to discover how the respective religious bodies stand in regard to doctrine and polity, and their nearness or otherwise to each other will determine the possibility of union in the future.

In regard to what constitutes Truth in this connection, there is no ambiguity. The Saviour's Prayer gives the definition: "Thy Word is Truth." This "Word" is found in the Bible, and, for our present purpose, in the New Testament. Our Saviour in His Prayer does not give us the details of that Truth which is essential to Unity. We get that elsewhere. We turn to His Apostles who were guided into all truth by the Holy Spirit, and from them we learn the elements of truth that are essential to doctrinal unity. These elements, seven in number, are set forth in the Fourth Chapter of Paul's letter to the Ephesians. They constitute the doctrinal unity of which the Holy Spirit is the Author. On this passage the "Westminster New Testament" has the following note: "It is the most remarkable utterance regarding the universal Church to be found in the whole of the New Testament." The seven essentials of the Unity, of which the Holy Spirit is the Author, are as follows:—

One Body, One Spirit, One Hope, One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One God and Father of all.

This enumeration limits the number of items on which doctrinal unity is demanded. The position which we take in regard to them is that they cannot be added to or taken from. In regard to the definition of the several items, we hold they are sufficiently explained in the language of the New Testament, and, therefore, all merely human creeds are rendered superfluous. We believe that in regard to six of these items there is substantial agreement among Evangelical Churches, and, as coming under that head, the Churches of Christ are practically at one with the

rest. In one item alone they differ from some of the Churches, in that they hold that the "One Baptism" referred to in Ephesians is immersion in water of those capable of exercising faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. They do not recognise anything else as Scriptural baptism. On this subject, equally with the others, compromise should not be possible. As there must be a basis of unity, it is reasonable to ask that the one provided for the Church by the Holy Spirit should be accepted without hesitation. Loyalty to revealed truth demands that we should give it preference before any human conception of what constitutes the essentials of Christian unity. The basis of unity of which the Holy Spirit is the author has the distinct advantage of limiting the number of things upon which agreement is necessary, and leaves out many things about which a difference of opinion is allowable.

As a step in the direction of union, it is urged that the party names which at present distinguish the various Christian communities be abandoned, and one that all can accept and has the merit of being Scriptural be substituted for them. The existing names are symbols of division, and, so long as they are perpetuated, the world will never believe that the Churches are united. Party names constitute one of the greatest obstacles to Christian Union. If organic unity ever becomes a reality, the united body cannot, will not, be called by a sectarian name. In harmony with this belief in the use of Scriptural names, the Churches of Christ (while, of course, they agree that those of sufficient ability and character may be set apart for the ministry of the word) do not accept current ecclesiastical titles and the common distinction between "clergy" and "laity."

In regard to Church polity, we must in this, as in other things, follow, as nearly as possible, the divine model. Where it is claimed there is liberty, this liberty must not violate any general New Testament principle. For example, it must not violate the principle of the common priesthood of all believers. We know of no valid reason why we should not return to the simple apostolic idea of Church government, and give up the elaborate machinery of modern ecclesiasticism. "In apostolic times, Churches, wherever formed," says Lyman Coleman, "became separate and independent bodies, competent to appoint their own officers and to administer their own government without reference or subordination to any control, authority, or foreign power. In each of the Churches several persons were appointed, with equal and co-ordinate authority, as overseers of the Church." Those officers were known by the name of elders or bishops. Besides those there were also deacons, and those constituted the officers of the several Churches before the monarchical idea began to develop itself. A return to the more democratic idea of Church government would make the road to union very much easier. If, in the attempt to gain organic unity, there should be a centralising of authority, and the establishment of a big ecclesiastical organisation, it would be preferable that the Churches remain as they are at present until they saw a better way out of the difficulty.

Light may be thrown on the position of the Churches of Christ by a comparison of it with the well-known declaration of a great Church. The Church of England, at the Lambeth Conference, set forth a basis of union in four propositions, as follows:—

- (a) The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as "containing all things necessary to salvation," and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith.
- (b) The Apostles' Creed, as the Baptismal Symbol; and the Nicene Creed, as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith.
- (c) The two Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself—Baptism and the Supper of the Lord—ministered with the unfailing use of Christ's words of institution, and of the elements ordained by Him.

(d) The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of His Church.

(a) The first of these receives our hearty approval, but with a preference for the word "only" instead of "ultimate."

(b) In the second, for the "Apostles' Creed" we should substitute the confession of faith made by Peter at Caesarea Philippi. It is the only creed that needs no revision. For the "Nicene Creed" we should substitute as a sufficient statement of Christian faith the seven unities of Ephesians Fourth.

(c) To the third we should add:—"And that these ordinances be restored to the place and significance they occupied in the Church of Apostolic times. The Lord's Supper as the central object in connection with the worship of the Church on 'the first day of the week,' and Baptism, meaning thereby immersion, to be administered only to those who sincerely profess their faith in Christ."

(d) In regard to the fourth, we should delete any reference to the "Historic Episcopate" and substitute for it the New Testament idea of Elders and Deacons.

CONGREGATIONAL.

Statement of what the Congregational members of the Commission on "The Difficulties and Possibilities of Organic Union" believe their various Churches would regard as essential to union:—

1. Doctrine.—The Divine Inspiration of the Old and New Testaments and their supreme authority in matters of Christian faith and practice.
2. Practice.—A personal confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour.
3. Polity.—The governance of Christ through the total membership as the final court of appeal.
4. Legal difficulties.—Monies or lands left for specific Congregational purposes.

On the points remitted by the Committee for further consideration it was agreed:—

1. To the principle of a representative body acting in matters of common concern.
2. That the Episcopacy as interpreted by the Anglican Church is considered to present a very serious difficulty to union.

METHODIST.

Report of Committee Meeting of Methodist members held May 29th. Resolved, that the following be our Report to be presented to the Meeting of the Commission on June 5th by Rev. A. E. Albiston.

1. Apostles' and Nicene Creed.
2. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as containing all things necessary to Salvation, and as being the rule and standard of Faith.
3. The Benefits of the Atonement available for the whole human family.
4. The above to be supplemented by an enlarged Credal Statement, setting forth in detail the doctrines to be accepted by the Unity of Churches.
5. Polity.—Itinerancy of Ministry or term Pastorates. Recognition of Local Preachers. Lay Pastorate—Class leaders. Adaptation of Circuit system, or grouping of Churches, with one system of Finance in the Circuit. Church Government—Modified Episcopacy.
6. Difficulties, including Legal Questions.—The Australasian Church has power to deal with all legal questions, subject to certain Doctrines

as defined, but as Victoria and Tasmania are only one Conference, the whole Church, including the General Conference, would have to assent and consent thereto. Adjustment of Funds—Supernumerary Fund, Foreign Missions, Connectionalism of Church arrangements and organisation and control of General Funds, with the recognition of the Supremacy of Conference, composed of equal numbers of Ministers and Lay Representatives.

PRESBYTERIAN.

The Presbyterian Committee charged to set out what they believe the Presbyterian Church would regard as essential to Union, think it necessary to premise that they cannot speak for the Presbyterian Church, and can only state what they think the Church should regard as essential to Union.

1. Doctrine.—It is essential that any Church uniting with the Presbyterian Church should accept *ex animo* the following Confession of Faith: "I believe in God, through Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, our Lord and Saviour, by means of the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. I acknowledge and receive the Word of God delivered in the Old and New Testaments, and interpreted to the believing soul by the Holy Spirit, as the supreme standard of faith and life." An enlarged Credo Statement, based on the above, and formulating more fully the doctrines generally accepted by the uniting Churches, would have to be agreed on.

2. Polity.—The Church exists for the proclamation of Christ's Gospel and the extension of His Kingdom, and its constitution and organisation must be determined by Gospel principles and be such as most efficiently to promote these objects. The Presbyterian Church regards these principles as requiring the acceptance of the following points of Polity:—

- (a) All adult communicants must have a share in the Government of the Church.
- (b) The admission and discipline of Communicants must be in the hands of the Congregation or its representatives.
- (c) There must be a recognition of the oneness of the Church through a gradation of Courts with appeals.
- (d) The training, admission, ordination, and discipline of Ministers must be in the hands of the Courts.
- (e) There must be a body of men in each Congregation, of which the Minister is a member and the Chairman, charged with the oversight of its spiritual affairs, elected by the communicants, admitted and ordained by those already in office.
- (f) These non-ministerial representatives of Congregations must be represented, along with Ministers, in the higher Courts of the Church.
- (g) With respect to the settlement of Ministers in Charges, large room must be made for the choice and call of Congregations, but the final decision must rest with the higher Courts of the Church as representing the mind of the Church regarding the common weal.
- (h) While it is in the power of the Church to employ Bishops or Superintendents, these must be elected by the Church, must be subject in all things to the laws and control of the Church, and the tenure of their office must be determined by the Church.
- (i) With respect to the ordination of Ministers, while a Bishop may preside, the act of Ordination must be performed by a Presbytery or equivalent Court.

OF THE SACRAMENTS.

1. The Sacraments of the New Testament, viz.:—Baptism and the Lord's Supper are holy ordinances instituted by Christ, wherein, by

sensible signs, Christ and the benefits He brings are represented, sealed and applied to believers.

2. The Sacraments become effectual means of salvation, not from any virtue in them or in him that doth administer them, but only by the blessing of Christ and the working of His Spirit in them that by faith receive them.

3. Though highly to be prized as means of grace additional to the word and not to be neglected without sin, yet grace and salvation are not so inseparably annexed to the Sacraments that no person can be regenerated or saved without them, or that all who receive them are undoubtedly regenerated.

4. Baptism with water into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (a) as a *sign* or symbol represents cleansing from sin and regeneration by the Holy Spirit; (b) as a *seal* confirms those blessings to those who by faith receive them; and (c) as a *means* of grace serves as a channel through which the Holy Spirit communicates grace and blessing to the recipients when and how He will.

5. It is to be administered to all unbaptised persons who make a credible profession of their faith in Christ, in which case it serves (a) as a mark of their admission into the visible church (b) as a seal confirming and strengthening the faith they had while yet unbaptised; and (c) as a means of grace which the Holy Spirit uses to convey increase of blessing as He will.

6. It is to be administered also to the infant children of believing parents who claim this privilege for their children, in which case it serves (a) as a mark of the covenant privilege belonging to such children in virtue of Christian parentage; (b) as a seal of the promise of God concerning such children; and (c) as a means of grace made use of by the Spirit to convey blessing to the recipients when and how He will.

7. The Sacrament of baptism is but once to be administered to any person.

8. The Lord's Supper, in which bread and wine are given and received according to Christ's appointment, (a) as a symbol serves to show forth the Lord's death and the believer's appropriation of the benefits of His sacrifice; (b) as a seal serves to strengthen and confirm the believer's hold of the gospel blessings; (c) and as a means of grace serves as a channel through which Christ, present at His Table in fulness of power to bless, communicates His Body and Blood to the worthy receivers as spiritual food for their nourishment and growth in grace.

9. It is to be dispensed to all who make a credible profession of their faith in Christ by a minister of the Word, lawfully ordained.

OF ORDERS.

1. The Lord Jesus Christ as the Supreme Head of the Church appoints therein a ministry of the word and sacraments, and calls men to this ministry.

2. It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the functions of a church officer, either in the exercise of rule or in ministering the word and sacraments, before he be lawfully called and appointed to this work by rightful authority.

3. The making of effective officers to bear rule and minister the word and sacraments in His church is the work of Christ, the Church's Head, who bestows the needed gifts on whom He will, calls them to service by the voice of the Christian people, and ordains them to office by the hand of those already in office. Thus three things are needed to constitute valid and effective orders in the church, viz.:—(1) The inner call from Christ, indicated by the possession of the needed gifts for service and the inclination thereto; (2) the outward call of the Church or Christian people; and (3) ordination to office at the hands of those already in office.

4. Ordination either by the laying on of hands, or simply by prayer, is the ratification after inquiry and examination of the call of the Christian people by those already in office and exercising rule in the Church. Such ordination is Scriptural, and is necessary that all things may be done decently and in order.

A brief Summary of the results of these Reports for the inquiry remitted to the Commission was drawn up by the Chairman with a view to facilitating discussion. It has been subjected to very complete examination and revision, and has been at length adopted in the form in which it is now presented. It should be mentioned that when it was drawn up it was not anticipated that it would prove so important a document as it has turned out to be. That will excuse the order in which the Churches are placed. It is quite an accidental arrangement, and not intended to be significant. An explanation should also be given of the fact that the Summary departs from its characteristic brevity in the paragraph dealing with Orders under the first main head. As the work of revision went forward this paragraph caused much discussion, and it was at length found that the only satisfactory mode of statement would be a full one. Perhaps the statement should have found its place in the Denominational Reports; but it has been found convenient to retain it in the Summary.

Summary of the Statements of the Denominational Committees as they bear on the Difficulties and Possibilities of Union.

I. Presbyterian Church and Church of England—

1. Presbyterian Church and Church of England are at one respecting Doctrine, apart from Orders.
2. They could probably arrange a Polity on which they could unite.
3. With respect to Sacraments the Church of England accepts the Presbyterian statement.
- 4 (a) *With respect to orders* the Presbyterian Church and the Church of England are agreed that it is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching and ministering the Sacraments in the Church "before he be lawfully called and sent to execute the same;" and, further, that those called to this work should be ordained to office by "men who have public authority given to them in the Church" so to ordain.

In the Presbyterian Church the persons having this authority are defined as the "presbyters orderly associated" in Presbytery meetings.

In the Anglican Church they are defined as the "Bishops" understood in the Anglican sense of the term.

- (b) "Ordination" in the Presbyterian view, either by laying on of hands or simply by prayer is the ratification after inquiry and examination of the call of the Christian people by those already in office and exercising rule in the Church, and is regarded as a means of grace.

Anglicans without affirming that any personal gift inherent in the ordinances is transmitted to the man ordained commonly assert that ordination is an instrument through which God bestows grace upon the person ordained after the manner of a Sacrament.

Both Anglicans and Presbyterians, after due inquiry into their fitness, authorise others than those ordained as Ministers of the Word and Sacrament to exercise them in the service of the Church.

- (c) With regard to the continuity of the Church Presbyterians and Anglicans are agreed that the spiritual unity, power and continuity of the Church are effected by the abiding presence in it of the Holy Ghost, outwardly exhibited, especially in the continual preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments.

Most Presbyterians (and some Anglicans) demand no further exhibition of continuity as essential.

Most Anglicans (and some Presbyterians) hold that, in addition to this the external organization of the Church as a society must be continuous and that this is effected through the ministerial succession, whether of bishops or of presbyters.

As this does not imply the denial of the sufficiency for the preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments, of a ministry not episcopally ordained, the Anglican Church may be able to recognise such a ministry, with a view to reunion, without demanding further ordination.

The Presbyterian Church is willing, in the interests of union, to give its recognition to Ministers not Presbyterially ordained if they are otherwise qualified according to the standards of the Church.

Presbyterians while deprecating and deploring schism or separation within the visible Church recognise that it may be necessary and justifiable for Christians on conscientious grounds to separate from the visible Church as existing at any time if that has become in their view unfaithful or oppressive, and that a body of Christians so separating has the right and power to institute and ordain a ministry for itself sufficient for the administering of the Word and Sacraments.

The Presbyterian Church would, therefore, have no difficulty in the event of acceptable union being proposed with any other organised body of Christians, in recognising the sufficiency of the ministry existing in that body without further ordination.

II. Presbyterian Church and Congregational Churches—

1. Presbyterian Church and Congregational Churches seem sufficiently at one respecting Doctrine, including Sacraments and Orders, to justify union.
2. As to Polity, the Congregational Churches would agree to the principle of a representative body acting in matters of common concern, and there seems to be here a basis for agreement.

III. Presbyterian Church and Methodist Church—

1. The Presbyterian Church and the Methodist are nearly at one with respect to Doctrine.
2. As to Polity, they could arrange a system that would meet the views of both, the main difficulty being the call of the congregation.

IV. Presbyterian Church and Baptist Churches—

1. The Presbyterian Church and the Baptist Churches are at one on Doctrine, apart from Sacraments.
2. The Baptist Churches seem to be prepared to accept a modified Presbyterian Polity.
3. The main difficulty concerns Baptism. The open Baptist Churches admit persons baptised in infancy to membership, but they do so on the ground that Baptism is not essential to membership, not on the admission that they have been baptised.

V. Presbyterian Church and Churches of Christ—

1. As to doctrine, apart from Sacraments, the Presbyterian Church seems to be sufficiently at one with the Churches of Christ to justify union.
2. As to Polity, the Churches of Christ are Congregationalist, but approve of united action in the furtherance of Home and Foreign Missions. No union seems to be possible.
3. They are uncompromising as to Baptism.

VI. Church of England and Congregational Churches—

1. The Church of England and the Congregational Churches would probably have no difficulty as to Doctrine, save with regard to Sacraments and Orders.
2. As to Polity, Episcopacy would be a very serious difficulty.
3. As to orders, there would be a somewhat greater difficulty to that between the Church of England and the Presbyterian Church.

VII. Church of England and Methodist Church—

1. Between the Church of England and the Methodist Church there would probably be no bar in respect of Doctrine.
2. Nor in Polity.
3. The Methodist Church would probably have a somewhat greater difficulty as to Orders than the Presbyterian Church.

VIII. Church of England and Baptist Churches—

1. The Church of England and the Baptist Churches seem to be at one in respect of Doctrine, apart from Sacraments.
2. As to Polity, the Baptist Churches have no necessarily fixed Polity, and they might possibly accept a modified Episcopacy.
3. With respect to Orders, the Baptist Churches have some difficulty about the Historic Episcopate.
4. With respect to the Lord's Supper the Baptist Churches hold much the same views as the Presbyterian Church, and with respect to Baptism the Church of England would have the same difficulty as the Presbyterian Church has.

IX. Church of England and the Churches of Christ—

The Church of England would have the same difficulties with the Churches of Christ as the Presbyterian Church has, and additional bars to union would be found in their views of Orders.

X. The Congregational Churches and the Methodist Church—

The Congregational Churches occupy the same position towards the Methodist Church as they occupy towards the Presbyterian Church.

XI. Congregational Churches and the Baptist Churches—

The Congregational Churches do not seem to be in any way debarred from Union with the Baptist Churches, except that they would find the same difficulty as the Presbyterian Church regarding Baptism.

XII. Congregational Churches and Churches of Christ—

The Congregational Churches occupy the same position generally towards the Churches of Christ as they occupy towards the Close Membership Baptist Churches.

XIII. Methodist Church and Baptist Churches—

The Methodist Church occupies much the same position towards the Baptist Churches that the Presbyterian Church occupies.

XIV. Methodist Church and Churches of Christ—

The Methodist Church is in the same position towards the Churches of Christ as the Presbyterian Church.

XV. Baptist Church and Churches of Christ—

There does not appear in the statements of their members any insuperable reason why the Close Membership Baptist Churches and the Churches of Christ should not unite.

II.—THE MAIN DIFFICULTIES.

It has become manifest that there are three main difficulties in the way of Organic Union. These should be set forth with that perfect frankness that has characterised all the discussions of the Commission; and at the same time it should be shown in what direction we should look if we are to overcome these difficulties.

1. The first difficulty is found in the Church of England's views regarding Orders and the Continuity of the Church. These views are clearly stated in the Summary. It is manifestly uncertain whether the Church of England could recognise the Orders of the ministers of the other churches, and it would not do so without the consent of the Anglican Church in England. Manifestly this obstacle must be removed before any Union in which the Church of England is included can be achieved.

The Commission, however, while recognising the gravity of this difficulty, have found sufficient reason for hopefulness. There seems to be a growing tendency in the Church of England, apart from the question of continuity, to acknowledge the sufficiency for word and sacraments of the orders of other churches, as founded on the Divine Call, and as endued with spiritual power. Should this tendency of thought establish and justify itself, a happy solution of the problem of Orders would be within sight.

The Commission believe that there is room and encouragement for further candid inquiry. They suggest such questions as the following:—

- (a) Were the Apostles the founders only of the Church, or were they an essential part of its organisation?
- (b) What evidence is there in the primitive Church that its organisation as a single society was to be preserved?
- (c) What power had the Church to change the form of the Ministry while preserving the succession?
- (d) How far and under what conditions can the Ministry of a body of Christians who are regarded as schismatic be recognised without abandoning the principle of Succession?
- (e) What are the relations between the Church as visibly organised and the Church as the Body of Christ?
- (f) What does the Church of England mean by "Apostolical Succession," and what is the truth at the heart of the doctrine?

2. The second great difficulty is the Doctrine of "Believers' Baptism," as held by the Baptist Churches and Churches of Christ. The "Close Membership" Baptist Churches and the Churches of Christ not only refuse to acknowledge the baptism of persons baptised in infancy, but decline to receive them into membership. This attitude is, of course, absolutely prohibitive of Union with any other Church. The "Open Membership" Baptist Churches, while refusing to acknowledge the baptism of persons baptised in infancy, welcome them into membership. The other Churches, while recognising the value of this concession, might feel a difficulty about uniting with those who so minimise the value of Baptism as to admit to the Lord's Table and to full membership persons whom they regard as unbaptised. This, however, might not prohibit Union. The growing practice in the Baptist Churches of Dedication Services for the infant children of Christian people encourages the hope of Union, and it seems clear that the path towards Union lies along the line of careful inquiry as to what is implied by Dedication on the one hand and by Infant Baptism on the other.

3. The third main difficulty is connected with Polity. The Churches of Christ hold extremely rigid views of Congregational Independence. The Congregational and Baptist Churches adhere to the same views; but they are prepared to make large concessions. It seems manifest that some form of centralised government is necessary in a United Church. The Church of England is pledged to some form of Episcopacy, and the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches would not think of abandoning a system of government which they have found admirably suited to their work, though they might be willing to modify it. The Commission do not think that this difficulty is insurmountable. The Congregational and Baptist Churches have already done much to centralise their Polity, and there is an inclination to go further. The other Churches are prepared to give careful consideration to the question whether larger freedom might not be conceded to Congregations under a central government "acting in matters of common concern." It is hoped that a sympathetic study of the position may lead to an arrangement that will conserve the most valuable elements of both systems.

4. In addition to these main difficulties, and in addition to minor difficulties which it does not seem necessary to mention, the Commission are well aware that there are very important obstacles of a less formal character. The various traditions of the Churches, the various modes of sentiment and thought to which they have been habituated, and even wedded, during centuries of separate life:—These constitute undeniably grave difficulties. Yet the Commission believe they are more serious in appearance than in reality. If a great United Church were formed, it should find room within its generous boundaries for every variety of Christian man, and for very widely differing modes of thought and culture. It is of no use to propose to unite the Churches unless we are prepared to conceive of a Church that is hospitable to the many varying modes of thought and worship, of feeling and activity and sacrifice, that can trace their origin in the mind of Christ. When such a conception has been ripened, the divergences we have referred to will be merged in a broad unity. Until that consummation is reached, it may be feared that they will be persistently arrayed against schemes of organic Union.

III.—GRATIFYING RESULTS.

The work of the Commission has had various gratifying results, which may be summed up as follows:—

1. The formal obstacles to Union have been more clearly defined than ever before, and the Commission believe they will be regarded as smaller than they were supposed to be. Moreover, inquiries have been initiated and lines of inquiry have been suggested for the future which are likely to reduce them still further.

2. It has been shown that there is a remarkable unanimity regarding Doctrine. Apart from questions related to Sacraments and Orders, there seems to be no such doctrinal divergence as to justify continued separation.

3. While all the Churches will, it is hoped, feel that they are nearer to one another than they had known, it has been made plain that the Congregational, Methodist, and Presbyterian Churches are very close together, and it would appear that there is no formal obstacle between them which might not be expected to yield to Christian wisdom and charity.

4. A happy feature of the Commission's work has been the absolute frankness of speech, combined with perfect good feeling, that has marked its many conferences. The fact that representative men from all the Churches have met together on this footing, have tried to express their own convictions clearly to those who held different convictions, and to appreciate sympathetically the views of others, has had an effect on

the minds of those who have been closely engaged in conference, and cannot fail to influence the Churches they represent.

IN CONCLUSION, the Commission desire to refer to the question of "Mutual Eligibility" of Ministers, which, though it was not formally referred to it, is suggested by its work. If organic Union must be delayed, it is suggested that at least some of the Churches might consider whether this step in that direction should not be taken. There are, of course, serious practical difficulties which would call for much wisdom and forbearance, but which might yield to administrative capacity. The Commission believe that this suggestion is worthy of the consideration of the Churches.

By authority of the Commission,

P. J. MURDOCH, Chairman.

Proceedings of Congress on Union of Churches.

Reception at the Town Hall, Melbourne, at 3 o'clock on Monday, the 1st of September, 1913. The meeting opened with the President's Address of Welcome.

REV. ALEXANDER McCALLUM.—My Lord Mayor, and Ladies and Gentlemen,—As the President of the Congress on the Union of Churches, I very gladly extend to you a welcome to this, the first Meeting in connection with what promises to be a most interesting series of Conferences. What the outcome may be, even the most sanguine amongst us can hardly prophesy. We believe that the Spirit of God has been furthering our efforts. Those who have been preparing the business for this Congress have been conscious of a spiritual help and comfort that gives assurance of the Divine presence in all our sessions.

We are greatly indebted to Mr. H. E. Wootton for setting in motion the arrangements that have brought this Congress into being. To his enthusiasm and energy we owe more than to any other person. I think it but right that at the very outset of our proceedings we should express our sense of obligation to him. He has striven to bring before us a vision of the Church of God, united, and fulfilling in herself all the purposes of Him Who called her into existence. Such a consummation is worthy of the prayers and labours of Christian men.

Nineteen hundred years ago, One Whom all Christians recognise as Lord and Master, prayed for His disciples. Amongst other great spiritual benefits that He sought for them was this, that they might be preserved in concord and unity—a unity as intimate and real as the relationship between the Father and the Son. "I pray," said He, "that they all may be one; as thou Father art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

The men for whom this prayer was prayed constituted a strangely-assorted company. Human—very human each one of them. Almost every temperamental type was represented. To attempt to unify them seemed to be attempting the impossible. They had shown considerable rivalry. On more than one occasion there had been a disposition to out-manceuvre one another. The one point that they had in common was the sincere attachment they had to Him who had called them into His service and fellowship.

Then the time came for Him to leave them, and He went back to His Father. They waited for the fulfilment of the great promise that had accompanied His prayer for unity. The morning of the Day of Pentecost found them "with one accord," and the Spirit of God came upon them. A new day had dawned for the people of God, and for the world. God the Holy Ghost had entered into His work as the Administrator of the Kingdom of God in the Church of Jesus Christ.

Centuries have passed since then, and some strange happenings have taken place. There are pages in the history of the Church, the reading of which thrills us. Our faith found customs and conditions of society prevailing and challenged them—challenged them, too, with a power that either won response or provoked persecution.

No age has been without its saintly men and women, and there was no lack of martyrs. At a great price our Christian faith and privileges were won for us, and have been preserved for us.

Then came days—inevitable days—when the facts of the Christian message and of Christian experience had to try and answer the enquiries of thought and reason. The days when Christian dogmas were being formulated were no less strenuous than the days of affliction. Men who were loyal to truth as they saw it found themselves at variance. Because human nature is, after all, only human nature, it is perhaps not to be wondered at that camps came to be formed within the Church itself, and

the elements of disorder and disunion became manifest. So on through all the years of all the centuries has more or less of disunion persisted. Nineteen centuries have looked on and listened whilst the followers of Christ have been trying to reason out the complete significance of His message, and to so define principles as to realise an actual and lasting comprehension of all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. He who taught us how to pray counselled that we should pray for God's Kingdom to come.

The Kingdom of God will come, and the will of God is surely to be done in earth. A united Christendom will be one of the most powerful factors in bringing this day in. There have been efforts—earnest and repeated efforts—to bring this Union about. We must admit that the main results so far have been only to discover how great the difficulties are in the way of union without really providing a solution to any of them. Our fathers have not been able to discover the way out. This should not discourage us, but rather lead us to pray more earnestly that the Divine guidance may be given to us in our search for the path across the mountains. There is a pass somewhere up in the heights above us, and we or our children will find it. It may not be found save by tears and sweat and sacrifices. Not the sacrifice which avoids difficulty by making compromises, but the loyalty to God which will carry the soul up into rarer spiritual altitudes, where the outlook is clearer, and where the noises of this busy world are unheard.

The propositions for unity, which are based upon the manifest utilities, are based upon considerations that appeal very powerfully to those who approach the subject casually. These considerations are not without their weight. A prodigal use of means, almost amounting to a waste, is an unwise and improper thing in any department of life. Even though we might find it difficult to come to a general agreement as to what constitutes overlapping in Church work, yet once overlapping is proven, we can hardly imagine that anyone should seek to justify it. Efficiency—and the greatest efficiency—is as desirable a thing in the Church as it is in purely secular affairs. When we take into consideration the importance—the supreme importance—of the issues we are dealing with, then inefficiency, or anything that tends to inefficiency, is unpardonable. Our Master will surely expect from us that we shall be at least as wise in His business as we are in our own.

The great considerations are, however, spiritual. There is a growing consciousness of the deep underlying unity which exists because of our relationship in Christ.

No one in this gathering will underrate nor discredit creeds or any formal professions of faith. In some form or other we must precipitate our conceptions of the Church of God, and of the mission and work of Jesus. Around these credal statements have grown up histories. The men who laid these foundations were our fathers. We have reason to be proud of our ancestry. I presume that none of us will say that all of them were wise at all times, nor will we justify them in all that they did. It seemed well to them that they should do what they did. They lived in other times to ours. Our wisdom is to dwell upon their work, with thanks to God for the loyalty they showed to what seemed to them to be the truth, and at the same time to be warned by their mistakes lest we, too, should by the bitterness of controversy delay the answer to our Master's prayer. Sentiment will linger around the households of faith that nurtured us. It is not to be expected that we will contemplate with complacency any dismantling of the roof trees under which we were born, and where our fathers and mothers worshipped God and found peace to their souls. We cannot deny—we have no wish to deny—that through all communions of Christians and in all communions the great spiritual transactions have been taking place, and men have found in Jesus Christ the Mediator that brought their souls to God. Whatever demands we have been disposed to make from those who have sought

fellowship with us all must surely feel that when manifestly Christ has blest some man with His own Spirit, or honoured some organisation with the marks of His approval, it is not for us to challenge that Divine act, but rather with gladness to recognise the wideness of the grace and mercy of God.

For this act we bless God—there is evident a growing consciousness that in the Divine method, God fulfils Himself in other ways than those which have seemed to us essential. The grace of God goes outside the boundaries which we have regarded as set for ourselves. We may not know how to reconcile this with the plans of Church building that we have felt to be Divine, but we can all rejoice over the doings of God, even when they may come to us with something of surprise. The recognition of this will inevitably bring with it spiritual consequences.

The kindling of the heart with a new feeling towards those who—as far as Church relationship with us is concerned—have been without, will surely be resultful. The only permanent basis of unity within the Church will be found in the affection of her members. Not only will the world know that we are disciples by the love we bear one another, but we ourselves will retain or lose our spiritual citizenship in the commonwealth of God according to our attitude to this one qualification. Kindliness, to those with whom we differ in matters of interpreting the Christian faith, even when it may seem to us to be on matters of first principles, is really a greater approximation to a worthy and lasting unity than the mutual subscription to one another's creeds. It is surely not too much to expect from our religion, that it will create within us such a spiritual condition as will enable us to sustain an undiminished affection for all who love Christ, even though they may differ from us in many things.

This is a tolerance born not of shallow convictions, but of the deepest, and it will be to us a "guide, philosopher, and friend." We may hold the most positive views, and yet this unifying grace will prevent any interruption of that fellowship which is of love.

Given such a basis for comprehension, the task of construction will surely be easier. This does not mean that the task will be simple. The history of past attempts would warn us against such a view. Patience and thought and prayer will be needed. Perhaps some great leader with a gift for synthesis may be given to us, and here on the soil of this land, where men are experimenting in economics, we may be called of God to lead His Church in this great grace.

We are alongside of great opportunities. There are open doors to an extent that our fathers never saw. The deepest things in human society await settlement. Humanity is on its way to something better than our present civilisation is giving us. Christ awakened questions that have been difficult to answer. All that has been for the betterment of men has been the result of His words and His Spirit.

We are those who believe that for every problem there is an answer, and that Christian principles will frame it, and only a Christian mood will make it possible of application. The Church of God will be there when the last word comes to be said concerning social order and social helpfulness. That may not be your Church nor mine, as we call them now, yet surely it will be our Church if it be His Church. The conditions of to-day are a challenge to us to set our hearts supremely upon the realising of His will, so that we may help to bring on the days of the new earth wherein there will dwell righteousness.

Our proximity to the East and to the great crowded lands of the earth is at one and the same time a menace and an opportunity. It is not alone the politicians who should be concerned about the future of Australia. We all know enough of history to know that our first line of defence in this Island Continent will be in the character of its people—the godliness of the people. The adequate Christianising of our children as far as training and influence can go is one of our tasks. With no

discredit to the work being done, we may all admit the needs for closer and more intimate attention to this. The spread, too, of our agencies, until not a family in the most remote part of our far-spread land shall be out of touch with Christian influence, is an ideal that in unity we could hope to realise.

The kingdom of God, however, is without bounds. We are touched to-day, as never before, with the call to fields that are white to harvest, but lack harvesters. Our brethren on the Mission fields are so close to awful facts that they work elbow to elbow through long days. When they come home to us it is with tearful stories of men and women and little children who "cry out," and there are none to answer their cry.

These things are our problems. He is our Master, and He has sent us that we may convince the world that the Father hath sent Him.

With actual, realised Christian unity we can do this. With barriers between us, His will and His way are thwarted and His crown is withheld. It is that we may bring about the fulfilment of His heart's longing that we are here to-day. There awaits us this great award that when we have found the way, having toiled on through all the clouds and all the mists, we shall come out into a large place.

The Church of God will have a second Pentecost. At the first one, the streets of Jerusalem were thronged with a multitude who, in thousands, pressed by the gateway of baptism into the Church of God and continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers. When we are again all one, as He and the Father are one, there will come a larger Pentecost, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

THE RIGHT HON. THE LORD MAYOR.—Mr. President, Rev. gentlemen and ladies,—As a business man my lot is cast in many places, pleasant and otherwise, and I can assure you it is very pleasant to me, as Lord Mayor of the City of Melbourne, to be honoured by an invitation from the Congress to extend to all present not only a Christian welcome, but a civic welcome. My words will be very brief on two accounts—first, for the reason that I have another engagement to fill, and, secondly, as I am not educated up to the standard to enable me to express an opinion, and therefore have not the authority; I am simply a labourer, but I wish you all God's speed in your endeavours in this matter of such world-wide interest, and when I see such a large and distinguished audience I hope and trust that the results will be all that you desire. I can quite recognise the difficulties there will be, but we cannot expect to bring about great changes in a day. Look at Federation, we had that in contemplation for some twenty odd years, but it is now an accomplished fact, and I cannot see, as far as the Christian world is concerned, with such a great work as you are doing, that you can fail to have the good feeling and well-wishes of all.

I am sorry to miss my old friend, the Rev. A. R. Edgar. His name is a household word, and I have known him for very many years, and it is with regret that I see he is not here this afternoon.

I would also like to mention that I saw in the paper last week that the Rev. Mr. Spurr is leaving Melbourne shortly, and I am sure we are all very sorry for that. I have not had an opportunity of knowing Mr. Spurr personally, but I am sure his loss will be a loss not only to the Baptist Church, but to the whole community.

I have nothing further to say, only to hope that God will bless this Congress in their deliberations, and I am quite satisfied that whether the result be for amalgamation and unity or not, that it will be advantageous to all Christians. I assure you of my sympathy with you all in extending this welcome to you; it gives me the greatest possible pleasure, and I feel honoured by the invitation.

The Secretary, Mr. H. E. Wootton, then read the notices for the following days, and a musical programme followed.

VEN. ARCHDEACON HINDLEY.—Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,—I

did not know that I was to have the honour of expressing the Churches' welcome. I thought I had to say one or two words of no importance somewhere in the programme, but with all humility, and not a little pride, I say the word "welcome" to this Congress, and I do so because of a new spirit that has come to the Christian Church all round the world. I discovered this last Saturday, if I had not had evidence of it before. I wanted to preach a sermon on union, and I took out one, not very old, but it was no good—it alluded to bitterness and strife in the Church—and I find now, thank God, that these things are passing away. In America, in Canada, in England, in Australia, without any collusion, without any correspondence so far as I know, men who love the Lord Jesus Christ are drawing nearer together. There was a time when the tendency seemed to be one of breaking up; large bodies divided; they again subdivided, and when the occasion of subdivision seemed to be the most trifling, the greater seemed to be the bitterness; and now this new spirit has come it seems to excite no surprise. We recognise it as a familiar spirit, and when we analyse it we see that it is none other than the spirit of Christ Himself.

The Congress is to be unofficial. There can be no harm done; no member can say the door is closed—there are no official members, and every member seems to be actuated by the desire to find out the solution of difficult problems, and I believe, what is best of all, they are not trying to find out by man's wisdom, but are looking and praying for guidance of the Holy Spirit of God. The Spirit has come, and we say it is welcome, and though we may not accomplish much, we hope for much. We believe and pray that presently all barriers will be broken down, and the new Church when it comes will not be an exclusive Church, for the spirit is one of inclusion, and is going to include all that is best in spite of differences.

The President apologised for the absence of the Hon. Geo. Swinburne, who was to have extended the Laymen's welcome.

TOWN HALL, MELBOURNE.

MONDAY EVENING, 1ST SEPTEMBER, 1913.

Chairman: Rev. Alexander McCallum, President.

The meeting opened with prayer, led by Rev. Prof. Adam.

THE PRESIDENT.—At this public meeting, the topic of which is, "Unity in relation to the coming of the Kingdom of God," it seems most appropriate that the first words to be said to us should be the words of our Master, when He prayed for such a movement as we at this time are interested in: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them, also, which shall believe on me through their words, that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee, that they, also, may be one in us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me, and the glory which Thou gavest me I have given Thee, that they may be one, even as we are one, I in Thee and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that Thou hast sent me and hast loved them as Thou hast loved me." That is His wish, and no word can have greater influence or greater command, surely, in such a gathering as we are in to-night, as the word of our Master. The first voice that makes an appeal to us to realise our unity in the Kingdom of God comes from Christ, who loved us and gave Himself for us. If we be worthy of the name of Christians at all, then surely His wish shall be to us supreme, and though we may not know at present just how His will is going to be realised and perfected, yet I am persuaded that all of us here to-night, if we knew His will and knew His way, because we love Him and because He is our Master, would obey. Other voices come to us to-night, the voice of a waiting world, the voice of a church that is

needing newer, holier power. The triumphs and victories of God's Church have been great. We are not gathered in this Congress to deplore failure or disaster. We are not driven to the attitude we have taken up because of some consciousness of failure or weakness, but because there is dawning upon us a sense of greater work yet to be done, and therefore there never was a day in the history of the Christian Church when she saw, as we are seeing to-day, the honour and the magnitude of the great work God has called us to, to regenerate society, to make the Will of God a realised thing in this world. That is the challenge that comes to us to-day, and not alone in our home lands, but from every corner of the world comes to us the challenge. At a great meeting in South Africa, at which one of the representatives of the Bible Society was present, a church thronged from wall to wall with coloured people, as great a crowd outside the church as inside the church, an appeal was made for those who were concerned about Christ to raise their hands. A forest of hands were raised in that building, but this pathetic thing happened. There was a broken window at one side, and through the broken window came a black hand, held up in the midst of a throng from the outside. I tell you here to-night, and surely God is telling us, there outside are hands waiting to come in, and if there be no other way, then surely it were wise for us even to break windows, that their hands might come in to manifest their eagerness for God. (Applause). If we can do something to create the instinct, the passion, out of which this development is coming, we shall not have met in vain. If God, even our own God, give us His blessing, we are sure of success and of gracious triumph. I had an opportunity this afternoon to speak at greater length, and we have two speakers here who are to address themselves particularly to this topic. I simply desire to say, as President of the Congress, that we desire your earnest prayers and sympathy with us that God may grant us His guidance.

Just one other word. We miss from this gathering to-night, and we shall miss from the gatherings of these days, one of the truest, saintliest, sanest men that God ever gave to this city of Melbourne, the Honourable James Balfour. He was preparing to be a participator in these gatherings. It is pathetic for us to know that in his last brief illness, when the mind was stricken with the weakness of the body, he talked over the thoughts he had been preparing to speak to us, and if we have not his presence and his fatherly words of counsel, we have his spirit still amongst us, and at the gathering of the Congress to-morrow we propose to submit a record concerning this good man, who rests from his labours, and his works do follow him.

Unity in relation to the Kingdom of God—Socially.

VERY REV. DEAN STEPHEN.

Mr. Chairman, I think you will bear witness that I was very reluctant to speak on this subject to-night, but when I came to think over it, and saw all that was involved in it, and considered the occasion of this meeting, it seemed to me that I should have been losing one of the opportunities of a lifetime if I had not accepted your invitation. Now, will you pardon me if for one minute I speak as an Anglican. You know it is often supposed that it is the Anglican Church that stands in the way of re-union. I do not quite know why that is thought. It may be something about the Anglican clergy; perhaps they are regarded as somewhat starchy. Or perhaps it is something about Anglican views; it is supposed that we lay too much stress on such questions as orders and episcopacy, that we lay an exaggerated emphasis on things which are really of no importance. Well, it is quite possible that our attitude in the past has not been all

that it might have been, and it is quite possible that our views are wrong, and as soon as we are convinced, we shall be ready with all humility to acknowledge our error. But I want to say at this stage that we of the Anglican Church do not want to stand in the way of re-union. (Hear, hear). You know every ten years all the Bishops of the Anglican communion meet at Lambeth, and discuss matters which are of importance to the whole Church, and they publish a circular letter giving their views. There you get the judgment practically of the Anglican Church. Now, twenty-five years ago the Lambeth Conference made proposals for the re-union of Christendom, and issued a sketch of the possible basis of re-union from their point of view, and at every Lambeth Conference since the same subject has been discussed. But what I want to point out is this, the advice of our leaders to the whole Anglican Church is not only that they should welcome proposals for re-union, but that they should make proposals for re-union, that they should have conferences with other denominations as frequently as possible, they should form committees to advance the project, and that they should pray for re-union. So I can assure you of this, that whatever our position may have been, and whatever our faults may have been, we want re-union as much as anyone.

Now, the side of the subject allotted to me to-night is that of re-union from the point of view of society. Think for a minute of the position of the Church to-day, and by the Church I mean every person who is baptised into Christ, of whatever denomination. The Church finds herself face to face with a community which it has to attempt to bring, and will ultimately succeed in bringing, to the Kingdom of God, or turning it to the Kingdom of God. If you ever go to Florence, you will have an opportunity of ascending the tower of the old Town Hall. High up in that tower there is a stone with this inscription: "Christus Rex, 1517," and the interpretation is this, that in the year 1517 the inhabitants of Florence, stirred by the eloquence of Savonarola, formally determined to take Christ as their king. His laws were to be their rule; all their institutions were to be tested by the spirit of Christ. That was the vision that floated before the minds of those Florentines, and the vision continued for a time, but it was only for a time. That is the vision that floats before the mind of every Christian, when the world will say: "Christus Rex," and every member of the community will take Christ as his king and take the law of Christ as his rule. That is what the Church is aiming at, but the Church finds that the world to-day, the society of which she forms a part, is very far from that ideal. She finds in her midst crime, which is a transgression of human law, and she finds vice, which is a transgression of divine law. She finds disease, which is again due to the breaking of divine law. She finds poverty, grinding poverty, unjust poverty, which is alien to the mind of Christ. She finds selfishness rampant; she finds the very constitution of society is based upon selfishness, that competition, absolutely selfish, is the ruling motive, and the Church has to transform all that. She has to reclaim those who have fallen in the fight with evil, those who have been worsted, and she has to prevent the recurrence of the defeat as far as possible. In her struggle, re-union would be a help to her in numberless ways. Let me suggest one or two. Under present conditions there is a feeling of uncertainty, a feeling of insecurity in the minds of men outside the Church. We will suppose that some poor wretch thinks of coming back to his Father, and he wants to join some Christian community, but which? His father was a Presbyterian, and his mother was a Baptist, and they used to attend the Anglican Church, and his sister became a Plymouth Sister. Now, where is the poor wretch to go? It is a mere chance. Possibly it does not matter very much at first, but the point I want to suggest to you is this, that very likely he won't go anywhere, just because he is bewildered, just because he does not know which type of Christianity is the highest, which is nearest

to the mind of Christ. There is that uncertainty about what Christianity is, and it is fostered by the fact that Christianity is represented by a number of sects, none of which is quite sure of the Christianity of the other.

Then, again, reunion would mean that there was more energy available for social work, and for one very simple reason amongst others. We put a good deal of our energy into controversy. We take great pleasure sometimes—of course, a merely intellectual pleasure—in pointing out the defects in our neighbours' systems. It is a very good mental exercise, but it is a very bad moral discipline, and it uses energy, and it uses thought and it uses love which might be expended on the regeneration of society.

Then, again, reunion would obviously mean better organisation. We might take a lesson from our friends in business. It is a matter of experience that if you form a trust or a combine—I know those words are not favourites in modern society, but a trust or a combine at least stands for business efficiency—it means they produce on a large scale, they produce economically, and they avoid wasteful competition and save money. It does not matter how they spend the money or where they get it from, but it means economy and efficiency, and the Church of Christ is, or should be, a great trust or combine for the production of righteousness, and if it were united in that way, it would mean greater efficiency and greater economy in its own proper work. All that is fairly obvious. But I want to call your attention to this fact, that is, the growing importance of the action of the State in these matters. The State is rapidly taking over what used to be the work of the Church in the advancement of social righteousness. The State has taken over education, and the State has taken over, or is taking over, temperance reform, and the State is dealing with the cure of disease and with the relief of poverty, and it ought to be dealing with the housing question—probably the action of the State will be extended to that in the future. The State is doing now what the Church alone used to do in olden days, and undoubtedly there is a great gain in the State doing this work. There is a gain in efficiency and in economy, and especially in this fact, that the State can deal with the whole of the problem. The Church, or every section of the Church, is limited by want of means, but the State grapples with the problem as a whole. Work gains in efficiency through the action of the State, but it loses in inspiration, and you will find that every work of that sort, everything that aims at social improvement, needs the touch of religion to give it life and effectiveness, and the State knows that perfectly well. Now, why cannot the State make use of the Church in doing these works? Ask a politician. He will tell you: "We are afraid of sectarian jealousy." Now, it is quite possible that the politician is a very timorous person. I have met such. And it is quite possible that he exaggerates his fear, but that is his excuse. He is afraid of sectarian jealousy. Why is there no religious education in State Schools? The politician tells you, because he is afraid of that bogey. Or take the case of our University. An attempt was made to establish a Chair of Theology—why did it fail? Sectarian jealousy might be provoked. Or, again, take the case of various institutions. The State might, and in fact does, appoint chaplains, but there is a good deal of trouble involved. Take the case of the Navy. You want to appoint a chaplain for a war-ship, but from what denomination shall he be taken? If you are going to be fair-minded, you must appoint seven or eight chaplains for every ship. As a matter of practice, the Government has appointed representatives from each denomination, and it is a matter of chance as to which ship is ministered to by an Anglican or a Presbyterian or a Methodist, but whichever way it is, it is unfair to somebody. Yet the Government does its best; it really tries to be fair, but these wretched differences stand in the way.

Then, again, there is at present a good deal of legislation, and there

will be more in the future, to prevent social evils, and there you need the voice of the Church to suggest and to regulate, and you need the voice of a United Church, partly because a United Church means a solid body of voters, and that is an argument that even a politician pays attention to. Even for a statesman, the voice of a United Church would mean much. It would mean that all the best minds and characters in the community would be centred in one institution that made for righteousness, that was always on the side of right, that was suggesting or advising or rebuking. It would be impressive from its very unity.

Then, again, consider the various occasions of importance in our national life. You remember a little while ago at the inauguration of the Federal capital there was no religious service, but, after all, it was a perfectly reasonable position, even for the Government to take up. It would have been very difficult to have had such a service conducted without causing jealousy, without being unfair to some section of the community. It was perfectly reasonable—if we cannot have a United Church to conduct that service, we won't have a service at all! So with other national occasions, when the nation unites in thanksgiving or in penitence, as it ought to sometimes. The services in our separate churches, or even our united services carried on by ministers of different denominations, cannot express the unity of the national life. We know they are shams; they do not represent the union which they profess to. We want one body that can express the religious life of the one nation.

You know in England there is an Established Church. Now, there are many objections to it, and I, for one, would be very sorry to see an Established Church in Australia, even though it were my own. (Hear, hear). But it has one advantage. There is one religious body to speak for the nation, to express its prayers or its praise or its thanksgiving or its penitence, one religious body to witness to the world that the whole nation is religious to its very core, and a unity, therefore, would give all the advantages of establishment with none of the disadvantages. That is one of the great functions of the Church at present, to inspire the life of the State, to modify, to mould, to regulate the legislation of the State, not to rule the State. The Church has tried to do that in the past, but it is not the function of the Church. It is bad for the Church, and it is bad for the State, when the Church is the ruler. But the function of the Church is to inspire, to suggest ideals, to mould public opinion, to make for righteousness in all its branches, and that can only be done by a United Church. Thy Kingdom come. We pray that every day of our lives, and I suppose we believe that our prayers will be answered, but that prayer will never be answered until Christ's prayer is answered first, that they may all be one.

Unity in relation to the Kingdom of God—Personality.

REV. F. C. SPURR.

Mr. President and Christian friends,—All people who are alive to the life around them are agreed that the time in which we live is one of exceptional gravity. Every century has had its crisis, but we all admit, without exaggerating what has taken place in previous centuries or what is taking place now, that the crisis through which the world is passing is particularly acute. The one great mark of life everywhere to-day is that of unrest, disquiet. Internationally, the whole world seems a powder magazine, and we are not quite sure from which direction the torch will be flung which will cause the explosion. Socially, in every part of the civilised world there is unrest and upheaval, and religion shares in the general unrest. Our most venerable institutions, churches, creeds, modes of life, are all challenged. The Bible has not escaped, nor has our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ escaped. Now, how are we

going to interpret this world-wide movement of unrest? Shall we interpret it in terms of decay or in terms of a new life—in terms of disintegration, or in terms of reconstruction? I venture to say for those of us who are here, who can honestly say we believe in the Holy Ghost, it is only possible for us to interpret the unrest of the modern world in terms of life. We believe that God is in it, and that all this unrest represents the birth pang of a bigger and a better life, the dawn of a better day, the breaking of a new epoch of God's Kingdom. We who are here at least believe that. I say that at the outset, because it seems to me that the yearning which is world-wide for Church Union can only be properly understood as related to the world-wide unrest in every other direction. I claim that this yearning for Church Union is part of a greater whole. It is a movement of divine life.

Now, it seems to me that the significance of the movement for Church Union is threefold. First of all, it is a movement to conserve the power that we feel is being wasted prodigally, to collect all the scattered forces that belong to the Church catholic and to make them effective forces, by conserving them, compressing them and bringing them into union. It is a movement of protection—to protect the spiritual life of man against the growing menace of practical and professional materialism. And the third significant thing, it seems to me, is that it is a movement of expansion, to put to some higher and better use the new power, the new life that is pulsating in the heart of the Christian Church. If we believe that God's Kingdom is coming, if we believe that our Lord Jesus Christ meant us to pray, and meant that that prayer should really be answered, Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done on earth—*on earth*, how many of us believe that?—as it is done in Heaven, we must believe that the ever-living Spirit of God is working in this movement that we are representing to-day. I hold that it is not a movement of despair, not a movement of cowardice; it is a movement of hope and a movement of new courage.

I am not going to touch on controversial ground to-night, because we are going to discuss these things quite openly and frankly during the next three days of this week. I think the beauty of this conference is this (one is betraying no secret)—the meetings that have been held of the Commissions have been characterised by the most wonderful frankness and by the most beautiful Christian charity. There has been no speaking smooth things for the sake of avoiding difficulties. The difficulties have been frankly stated, without bitterness and with wonderful charity, and that seems to me to augur the very best for the discussions that will take place from Tuesday to Thursday. Without seeking to enter into controversial ground at all, I want to generally ask: If this movement is of God, towards unity, as we believe it is, shall we just try for a minute or two to understand what kind of unity it is that we are really seeking? Let us define it to ourselves, and what is its relation to this big question of the Kingdom of God. If you turn to your dictionary you will find that unity is defined as "harmony in the midst of variety," the variety existing, but all together giving the sound and the appearance of perfect harmony; as distinguished from eccentricity and distinguished from contradiction; as distinguished from unison, which is simply the striking of the same note or a similar note, leading to monotony and to disgust; and distinguished from uniformity, which is sameness of shape, and of which we soon tire. By unity we mean this harmony in the midst of variety. We are Christian people, and we go beyond the dictionary, we go to Jesus Christ, and when we ask our Lord Jesus Christ what He means by unity, He gives to us a definition which goes to the quick. In that prayer, part of which was read to us to-night by our chairman, our Lord Jesus Christ said—His words are engraven deeply upon our hearts—"that they may be one as we are, that they may be one in us." We must begin here before we discuss details of government, of orders, and these other things that

are to come before us. We are dealing now with the essential things, the first, the primary, the radical things, and the unity which Jesus Christ bids us seek is primarily the unity of faith in Him and a unity of life with Him. We are not seeking a kind of Noah's Ark in which we may house all kinds of beasts, clean and unclean. We are not seeking simply to swell the numbers of persons who come under one government. This movement is Christian, or it is nothing to us who are here. The unity we seek is a unity that puts Jesus Christ at the very centre. Every man must confess his own faith. I confess mine. It is a remarkable thing that in the Anglican liturgy, where most of the prayers are in the plural—the general Confession is in the plural, the Lord's Prayer, following our Lord's mode, is in the plural, but when it comes to the Confession of Faith, it is changed to the singular for the first time in the service. "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth," as if, in the congregation that has expressed itself corporately, and spoken in the plural of its needs, and offered its intercessions and prayers, when it comes to its faith, each man detaches himself from his neighbours, and confesses his own personal Credo. I want to detach myself from the rest and make mine so far as this question is concerned. The unity we seek must be a unity that puts Jesus Christ's divinity in the very front, a unity that knows Jesus Christ as man's sole redeemer, as man's sole master, a unity that is known to us by the name of evangelical. I, for my part, hold, and you who are here I am sure do, to those fundamental things which are known as evangelical, and which centre in the Divine Person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I know a church in the south of France, a place where I have often visited, I will not say worshipped. It is a French Protestant church; it is known for its liberality. They have two ministers, the one is quite an extreme rationalist, the other an extreme evangelical, and once, when I asked my friend with whom I stayed, one of the elders of the church, how they managed to have two ministers not simply diverse, which would have been understandable, but apparently contradictory, he replied with a shrug of the shoulder: "You see, we touch extremes here." In the morning I have heard one of the clergymen there preach a sermon in which everything that was Christian was sent practically to the bottom of the sea, and at the close he would say: "You have heard my side of the case; if you desire to hear the other, my colleague will occupy the pulpit this evening." I do not think we want that sort of unity. There will always be differences of view about Christian doctrine, but no difference with regard to the divinity of Jesus Christ, no difference with regard to His Lordship, no difference with regard to His redeeming work. Here Anglicans and Free Churchmen, Catholics and Protestants, are one, a unity primarily of faith in the living Son of God, a unity of personal spiritual life attached to Himself, and that unity exists. It exists already. We have not to create it. In our prayers, in the common hymns that we sing, in our worship, in our confessions, in that corporate spiritual feeling that we are aware of in moments of excitement and in moments of high exaltation, we are really and truly already united to Him and to each other. In moments when the great crises of the Church come, it leaps into being. Let rationalism show its brazen face and speak in its raucous tones, and members of all the Churches will rally to lift up the standard which they seek to trail in the dust. But we must be frank in connection with the Kingdom of God. What we are after is the manifestation of that unity. It already does exist, but what we are seeking in this Congress is to find some manifestation of that unity, some working of it in a practical way that will, as the Dean has said, have the effect of making our work more effective in its impact upon the life round about it. What kind of unity is it I want to suggest to you? Again, without entrenching on any subject that will come before us during the week, I want to suggest that here and now we must draw together to this centre and find this unity and think of it in terms of life. If the unity

that Jesus Christ wishes for His church and for His people is primarily a vital one, then its manifestation must partake of that quality—it must be a manifestation of life. How does life manifest itself? It has three marks. Its first mark is diversity. The biologist tells us that life is practically one. Mesmer said, one hundred and thirty years ago: "There is but one universe, one life, one disease, and one health." In saying that he said much more than he meant to say. He said it in favour of his own particular system, but there is a whole religious philosophy in it. There is but one life, but look at its variety of manifestation. And the diversity of life is its charm. Nobody would wish for uniformity. The life we seek in Jesus Christ must have the mark of all life, the mark of diversity. It must have a second mark, and that is the mark of interchange. Now, that is one of our great difficulties, that of interchange, but if our unity is one of vitality, it will have that mark of life. Without going into debatable questions, you accept the general principles of evolution. That is one of the things that evolution has to tell us, that right through the long process in which the Creator has been at work there has been interchange, so that what you see now had its origin in something that was utterly unlike it, but in the meantime modifications have taken place until at last you see this completed form under your eyes. It has through all the mark of harmony. Christian brethren, it is not our differences that constitute our scandals, but our discords and our contradictions. It is not our diversities that have stood in the way of God's Kingdom, but our oppositions and our want of harmony in the midst of diversity. The union that we seek is a union of life, the harmonising of all the diversities in the central facts and in the vital forces.

I want you for one moment, in that light, to look at the divisions of the Christian Church. They fall into two classes. Some of the divisions have been born of pure naughtiness, of self-will, of vanity, of want of charity. A great many of the sects that have come into existence, particularly the smaller ones, ought never to have had their being, and would not have had their being had there been common intelligence and common Christian charity. I need not specify, but certainly the 380 different sects tabulated by Whittaker in his Year Book cannot represent the mind of Christ, and cannot be fair illustrations of the diversity of one common life in Jesus Christ. But there is another kind of division. We must do justice to it. There have been divisions that have come into existence as the result of life seeking to express itself when it was hampered and confined. Will anyone deny that George Fox felt himself compelled to found that society that for so long bore his name, because of the life of Christ in him that was seeking for expression? Would anyone dare to charge John Wesley with being a schismatic? To his dying day he declared he never meant to break with the church to which he belonged. The society he formed was life trying to express itself, the divine life at work in the hearts of men and women. A great many of the Churches that have come into existence have been the attempt of life to express itself in some form not available for it in the forms that were round about. But it seems to me that the time has now come for two things to happen. First, so far as those divisions are concerned that were born of naughtiness and want of charity, the time has come for penitence, for retraction, for a frank admission that they were wrong, and, in God and man's name, a thing to have done with once and for all. On the other side, so far as those divisions are concerned which came into existence because life was seeking to express itself, the time has come, has it not, if I may use the splendid phrase of Bishop Armstrong, of Chicago, the time has come to harmonise values. All the evangelical churches have been gathering gold. Has not the time come now when we can bring our heaps together and let the whole body of Christ be enriched by what they have gathered in the course of the ages? Surely that is the great call to-day, that the wealth of all should belong to all,

so that each can say: "All things are mine," and I think that in the providence of God it will be found that these divisions that have been the fruit of the effort of life to express itself will turn out ultimately to have been for the enrichment of the great Catholic Church.

And, last of all, the connection, the relation of this with the Kingdom of God is obvious. It is necessary that these values should be harmonised, and necessary that this wealth should come into the common fund to-day, because otherwise, as the Dean has said to us in other language to-night, we lack that impact which the one Church can have, and only the one Church can have, upon society, upon national life, and the great fields outside that await our work and our reaping. But I want you to let me say, and I think it ought to be said, and said in Melbourne very openly and plainly, a United Church is equal to anything, a United Church alone can oppose the united forces of evil. Every time the united forces of evil score because we are disunited. You know how Napoleon won his victories. People have spoken of Napoleon's great genius. In what did it consist? Certainly he was one of the great generals of the world, and one of the geniuses of the world, but Napoleon's chief genius consisted in this. If you have not noticed it, read the story of any of his great battles, and see how in every case it is apparent. Napoleon never attacked the foe face to face. He always divided the enemy up into small sections and cut them to pieces one by one. That was Napoleon's great art. It is the devil's art to-day, to cut up the forces of the living God into small sections, and slay them. We shall never do any good with the saloon until we are united. We shall never do good with those evils to which the Dean has alluded, the sweating, the unjust money getting, the worship of mammon, the society so formed that it is easy for a man to make gold unjustly, until the Church can with one voice produce and cite the evil and render it impossible for it to be carried on. Single churches cannot do it.

I do not touch the second point but with a word. We can never evangelise the world outside except through a United Church. "Why," asks an American writer, "why should we take to the Indian or the Chinese or the Japanese an account of all our religious quarrels of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries? Why should we confound the wits of the heathen in order to save his soul? Why not take to him a pure Christianity, coming behind with the voice of one United Church?" It can only be done as the Church is united. Evangelisation abroad and at home is shorn of half its strength because of disunion.

The last thing is this, the greatest of all, it seems to me, the question of education. Unless we can provide an atmosphere for our sons and daughters that is Christian, unless we can send them from our Christian homes to Christian schools and to Christian universities, we shall make no progress. Oxford, Cambridge, Bologna, and the great universities of the middle ages were creations of the Church, and the trouble with our modern universities is this—and I speak of Melbourne specifically—that the atmosphere is hostile to the Church. You take the difference between Adelaide and Melbourne. In Adelaide some of the professors are fine Christian gentlemen, office-holders in churches, and the atmosphere surrounding these men of science is an atmosphere that makes it not difficult—at least, I cannot say easy—for the students to preserve the purity of their Christian faith, by opening their minds to the knowledge which their professors seek to impart to them. With us in Melbourne it has been. I say frankly, a scandal that for a good many years past an atmosphere has not been Christian. It has been rather agnostic, and men have had to fight for their faith. How is it going to be circumvented? If the Christian Church were one, the Christian Church would no longer have need to send her sons and daughters to pagan universities; she could have her own. She would have her own schools, her own universities, and instead of letting the State teach her children, she would have the money, the

teachers, the learning and the wit and will to educate her own children, and to prevent them from going out in the desert as many of them do for a quarter of a century, before they come back to the faith of their mother and their father. A Christian Church and a United Church would educate the coming generation, and only a United Church can do it.

These are the things we have to talk of this week, and I pray you, let us get to our knees about it. Let us pray God to save us from the spirit of sectarianism, to fill our hearts with charity, to let us see the problems that lie before us for solution, that before this week is over we must see more clearly than we see now the possibility of realising Christ's prayer, that we all may be one.

The meeting concluded with the Doxology and the Benediction.

At this stage the Congress adjourned until Tuesday morning, 2nd September, 1913.

TUESDAY MORNING, 2ND SEPTEMBER, 1913.

THE PRESIDENT.—We all feel very much the dispensation of God's providence in calling away from our city and our Church and from this Congress one who was promising to take part in it, and whose influence would have been very helpful. I refer to the late Honourable James Balfour, and we thought it would be a particularly appropriate thing to carry some record that would express our feelings with respect to him and his work. You know that in the wandering moments of Mr. Balfour's last illness he felt he was speaking to a gathering in connection with this Congress. It was in his mind and on his heart, and he looks on from the other world at the work we are doing, with those who have won their victory. The Rev. J. F. Macrae will read the record that has been prepared, and which we are suggesting to make with respect to Mr. Balfour.

REV. J. F. MACRAE (read).—"This Congress desires to place on record its deep sense of the loss sustained by the whole community in the death of the Hon. James Balfour. His rich, strong nature was permeated through with the love of God, and he gave himself with rare ability and devotion to the doing of His will. He opened the great deeps of his being to the Spirit of God, and he loved Christ with an intensity that grew with the years. The result was a life that was singularly winsome and abundantly fruitful.

"Mr. Balfour was possessed of a consuming energy that made him a leader in many enterprises. In business he won a name for integrity and sagacity that made him trusted beyond most men and gave him an influence possessed by few. In politics he rapidly came to the front, and through all the stress and strain of public life he wore 'the white flower of a blameless life,' until his name stood for all that was highest and best in the life of the state. In Church life he was a great leader, exercising an influence that was felt far beyond the bounds of his own denomination. He was deeply interested in all that made for the building up of Christ's Kingdom at home, and he was equally devoted to the Church's Missionary activities abroad. His interests were as catholic as they were intense, and in all public movements he was a trusted and conspicuous leader. He gave himself with self-forgetting zeal to the promotion of evangelistic efforts, and he wrought with tireless enthusiasm for the introduction of Scripture lessons into the State schools. He took a leading part in the Bible Class movement of his own Church, and was a staunch supporter of the student movement. Indeed, there was nothing that made for the moral and spiritual welfare of the community in which James Balfour was not deeply interested and personally involved.

"His great and consecrated personality helped to draw the denominations into close co-operation, and he was to have taken a leading part in the discussions of this Congress.

"One of the great secrets of his power was that he was a man of prayer. His reliance was upon God, and in quiet communion with Him he renewed his strength day by day.

"And now he is gone from our midst, and life is poorer and lonelier for his going. But our deepest feeling to-day is one of devout thankfulness to God for a great life nobly lived, and an influence that will abide with us while life lasts. With our prayer of thanksgiving there mingles one of intercession for her who shared with him his long life of splendid service. May God comfort her and her children in these dark days, and keep their hearts in Christ's perfect peace.

"For ourselves we pray that there may come to us a deeper spirit of surrender to Jesus Christ, and to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, as we face the great task set before us, that we also may use our life, as he used his, for the building up of Christ's Kingdom and the working out of His great purposes."

REV. JOHN WALKER.—I beg to second the recording of this Memorial. I have known Mr. Balfour in public and in private life, and in speaking to this motion I have a deep sense of personal loss. The Memorial is beautifully worded, but one almost feels the language is cold. He was most loving, unselfish and devoted, a rare soul. He lived in the good providence of God to a good old age, and yet he was a young man at the end. I said to him not many weeks ago, that when I looked forward to being old, and felt a dislike to that fact, the dislike vanished as I looked upon him, for his was not a crabbed old age; it was a youthful, cheery, genial, clear-sighted, warm-hearted old age, and one felt that if one could grow old like that one could bless God and take courage. I think it is well that at the beginning of this Congress a note of thanksgiving should be given to God for a life which has left precious influences behind, a life which has been lived for the good of this community and for the unity and advancement of the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

THE PRESIDENT.—I am sure you all approve of such a record as this, singularly descriptive of the beautiful life so well lived.

Carried unanimously.

THE PRESIDENT explained the regulations which had been agreed upon with regard to the placing before the meeting of Reports, the time to be allowed subsequent speakers, and the moving of resolutions and amendments. He called upon the Convener of Commission No. 2, Rev. Professor Adam, to present his report.

REV. PROF. ADAM.—Mr. Chairman, fathers and brethren,—The vision which is raised before our minds by the perusal of these reports is a very attractive one, viz.—a United Evangelical Church of Australia, which shall be neither Anglican nor Presbyterian, nor Congregational, nor Methodist, nor Baptist, but which shall be comprehensive enough to provide a home for all evangelical Christians in this great Commonwealth of Australia. We shall have the opportunity of discussing the possibilities and the difficulties of an organic union at a later meeting of this Congress on Thursday. Meantime, during the next two days, we are to be occupied with matters which, though they do not involve immediate organic union, yet suggest steps which may be helpful in that direction. The report you are to receive to-day, and the one you are to receive to-morrow, deal with matters which, though not involving organic union, would yet help to draw the Churches closer together in various important respects.

The Report that I have the honour to submit is that of Commission No. 2, on "The Standardisation of College Curricula and the Possibility of Combined Theological Education." Our report has the distinction of being the shortest of the three reports contained in this volume, and at the same time it deals with what I regard as at least one of the most practical steps in the direction leading towards greater union, that of uniting our forces in the matter of theological education. You will notice that to

our Commission two topics were entrusted. First, the Standardisation of College Curricula, and, secondly, the Possibility of Combined Theological Education.

In regard to the first of these topics there is not much said in our report, and the reason for that is not that we regard this matter as unimportant, but because there is already in existence an institution which has as its main object the standardisation of theological education. I mean the Melbourne College of Divinity, and we did not feel it to be advisable, as a Commission, to suggest anything further in that direction than was being done by the Melbourne College of Divinity. I daresay that most of you are familiar with this institution and with its aims, but as it concerns one of the topics that was remitted to our Commission, I may briefly refer to what this College is doing. It has now been in existence a couple of years, and it is itself a beautiful illustration in regard to Christian unity. In regard to its constitution, it consists of representatives of the various Churches that are represented in this Congress, the Anglican, the Presbyterian, the Congregational, the Methodist, and the Baptist. We have six Anglicans, including the five Bishops of Victoria; we have four Presbyterians, four Methodists, and one Congregationalist, and one Baptist on this College, and the College has power to add to these numbers. It has not yet exercised this power. Under the Act incorporating it, it can add one more minister from some other denomination than those already represented, and four laymen, no two of whom are to be from any one denomination. I hope before long the College will exercise this power of co-opting these additional members. This College does not at present do any teaching. Its aim is to raise the standard of theological education and to bring about some measure of uniformity as far as possible, and it does so by establishing two different courses of study, one leading up to the degree of Bachelor of Divinity, and the other leading to the Diploma of Divinity, Licentiate of Theology. The Bachelor of Divinity degree is the same standard as the London University and others of the old land, and it is quite as creditable to obtain the degree at this College as at any other Divinity College in the world. The Licentiate of Theology is in some respects an easier degree to obtain, but the main difference is that, whereas no one can enter for the Bachelor degree unless he is a graduate of Melbourne or some other university, for the Diploma it is not necessary to be a graduate of a university, and one who has not had the benefit of a university education, but has qualified elsewhere, may enter for it. Now, this institution has been in operation for two years. Last May we had our first graduation. On that occasion one received the ordinary B.D. degree, and half-a-dozen passed the first examination for the B.D., while three passed for the Diploma Licentiate of Theology. None of these candidates belong to the Anglican Church. We have representatives from the other Churches, the Presbyterian, the Methodist, the Congregational, and the Baptist—all have candidates qualifying. One reason why the Anglican Church has not yet taken advantage of this is that there was a little difference of opinion at first as to whether any letters would be allowed to those who took the Diploma. The Anglican Church College allows the letters Th.L., and the Bishop was anxious that the Melbourne College should allow the letters to those who had taken the Diploma. At first that was ruled out, and by consequence, most of the Anglican institutions preferred to continue the preparation for their own degree, which gave them the letters of Th.L. But since then the policy of the Melbourne College of Divinity has been altered, and a resolution has been passed permitting the use of letters L.Th., so that the one has Th.L. and the other L.Th., and we are hoping that this concession to the desire of the Bishop will give a greater attractiveness to the Diploma of the Melbourne College of Divinity than the Diploma of the Australian College of Theology, which is a purely Anglican institution. That institution, the Melbourne College of Divinity, is at work and getting a hold; we

hear of more candidates coming up from these Churches each year, and it will help to standardise and to elevate the standard of theological education. We did not think it necessary or desirable to suggest anything further in that direction than what is already being done by the Melbourne College of Divinity.

The next topic remitted to us was the question of the possibility of combined theological education. In regard to that, the first thing we did was to make inquiry as to what was at present being done, to inform ourselves as to the existing situation, and you will find the results that we gained from such inquiry tabulated on page 8 of this Report. We did not attempt to go very exhaustively into all the details of these theological institutions, and gather all the possible information we could about their finances, but we gained as much information as we thought was relevant to the purpose in hand, and I should like to remark upon one or two points in this tabulated information, which seem to me to have a bearing upon the question of the possibility of combined theological education.

First, with regard to accommodation. We found that the four Churches—the Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational, and Baptist—had each a central college where all its students were trained, and that in the case of three of these the colleges were conveniently near each other and near the University, the Presbyterian at Ormond, the Methodist at Queen's, the Baptist at Gatehouse-street, Parkville, very conveniently situated near one another. The Congregational is a little further off, as its accommodation is in connection with the hall of this Church (Collins-street Independent). At present, however, the Congregational associates with the Methodist in certain subjects; there are joint lectures, so that it seems possible to have joint lectures even at some distance. With regard to the Church of England, we found it had seven institutions where students were being trained for the ministry. Three are in Melbourne, and four in the country. Those in Melbourne are St. John's College, presided over by Dean Stephen, where there is room for some eighteen students in training. Then there is Trinity College, in the University grounds, and where the School of Theology has recently been revived—it had been allowed to fall out of use, and Trinity College had not recently been used for training theological students; there are now some twelve residents doing arts and theology with a view to the ministry. At Ridley College, Sydney-road, there is room for sixteen students, and they are drawn to a considerable extent from the dioceses of Sale and Bendigo. Then there are four institutions in the country, of a somewhat more preparatory kind. At Sale there is a preparatory Hostel, at Bendigo a Theological Hall, at Wangaratta St. Columb's Hall, at Ballarat St. Aidan's. We cannot expect to amalgamate or secure common teaching in the country. We have to confine ourselves to Melbourne, and, further, to those colleges within easy reach of each other. With regard to the number of students, I found that in all, if you take those who are studying arts and those doing home mission work in the country, but looking forward to the ministry of the various Churches; altogether there are some 243 in preparation for the ministry in Victoria—82 Presbyterian, 100 Anglican, 23 Methodist, 19 Congregational, 19 Baptist—altogether, 243. But of these only 135 are in Melbourne; the others are in the country engaged in Home Mission work. The 135 in Melbourne are doing either arts or theology. I do not suppose more than 70 or 80 at the outside are actual students of theology, but about that number might be regarded as bona-fide students of theology, and might be in a position to attend a common course of lectures on theological subjects. This indicates the number to be dealt with in any common course would be somewhere under 100.

As regards finance, we did not think it necessary to make very minute inquiries. You will find some information about that, and as to how students are helped with regard to financial support under Heads 3 and 4, but that does not profess to be exhaustive. It is sufficient, I think, for the purpose in view.

Then there is another question, as to the date when the session begins in the various colleges and the length of the session. It seems at the present there is no uniformity with regard to that. In some cases the session begins, as in the Presbyterian Church, as early as the second Tuesday in March, and closes near the beginning of September. In other cases the session begins at the same time as the University, and they hold the same terms as the University. In other cases, again, the session does not begin until well on in April. The Methodist, for example, begins after the second Sunday in April. That is a point that needs careful consideration in regard to any combined system of lecturing, the time of beginning and the length of the session.

As to conditions of entrance, in most cases there is an entrance examination required, although of different standards. Conditions are given in No. 6.

With regard to the length of the curriculum, we find that in all cases there is at least two years given to the study of theology. In several colleges not more than that is given. The Presbyterian gives three years, and the Baptist gives four years between arts and theology, but at all events the two years' course is common to all the colleges.

In regard to the staff, it is specified in the last column here.

Coming to the practical proposals, after giving full consideration to the information that we had acquired, we came to the conclusion that a good deal might be done to raise the standard of theological education, and also to unite the forces available for such education, and make it more efficient by adopting a system of co-operation in theological teaching in regard to subjects that were being taught in common in all the colleges. We thought it possible to have a series of inter-collegiate lectures, whereby the services of the staffs of the various colleges might be made use of and made available for the mass of students attending all the colleges, and we were encouraged in this idea by finding that this had actually been carried out by four important denominational colleges in Montreal, in Canada. I have in my hand here the calendar of this united inter-collegiate course of lectures given in connection with the four colleges affiliated with the McGill University—the Anglican, the Presbyterian, the Methodist, and the Congregational—and they all have buildings quite near the McGill University, so that geographically they are favourably situated for a combined effort. These four, some years ago, considered a plan for an inter-collegiate scheme of lecturing, and during the past two years this has been in operation under a common Board of Management, and with a common faculty, consisting of the professorial staff of the various colleges, they have arranged a scheme of lectures covering most of the ground in the theological curriculum. The subjects mentioned in this inter-collegiate course include Old Testament Exegesis and History, New Testament Introduction and Exegesis, Church History, the History of the Early Church, the History of the Mediæval Church, the History of the Earth, the History of Doctrine; also Patristics, Philosophy, History of Religion, including Introduction to Philosophy, Christian Apologetics and Christian Ethics, Systematic Theology, Christian Missions, etc. They have a somewhat elaborate scheme of inter-collegiate lectures giving considerable variety of choice to the students attending the various colleges, but the thing has been in operation and has been successful there, and abundantly justified by results. If that has been done in Canada, it can be done here also.

Our Commission agreed to recommend (on page 6 of our Report) that common lectures might be given on these subjects:—1. Old Testament Language and Literature. There is no difference of opinion in our different denominations with regard to Hebrew; the language does not permit of any controversial matters that would cause difficulty. 2. Greek New Testament Language and Literature. 3. Patristics—the writings of the Fathers. 4. Church History, Ancient and Mediæval. We thought it was well to leave our modern Church History to be dealt with by

separate institutions, in case there should arise any controversial questions there. Of course the lecturers would need to be instructed, and regard themselves in honour bound to realise that they were dealing with students of different denominations, and not to make use of their position for proselytising purposes. 5. Biblical Theology and Introduction. 6. Historical Theology or History of Doctrine. 7. Philosophy of Religion and Apologetics. 8. Comparative Study of Religion. 9. Homiletics. 10. Christian Ethics and Sociology. 11. Christian Missions. 12. Paideutics. 13. Elocution. We propose to leave over for separate treatment such topics as Modern Church History, Ecclesiastical Polity, Symbolics, Pastoral Theology, and Liturgics. That is pretty much on the same lines as Montreal, but there they have included Systematic Theology in the common course, while we have kept to History. In connection with such a scheme as this it would be eminently desirable that there should be a common lecture hall, the common property of the joint Board that managed this course. That is what they have aimed at and accomplished in Canada. Very soon after the idea was started and the course began, steps were taken to raise a fund for building a new common hall. It has been successful, and the building, if not already occupied, is in course of erection, and will very soon be in a fit condition for occupation. We certainly have not sufficient accommodation in connection with any of our colleges at present to adequately house and provide room for such a common course, so that it would be eminently desirable that a common hall should be erected, and if so, of course the question of a site would have to be considered. I believe it is somewhat difficult to get a suitable site in that neighbourhood, but one suggestion made by a member of the Commission was that if this was approved of, the Churches might approach the existing colleges to see whether any of them could provide a site on their ground for this common hall, and the gentleman who made that proposal seemed to think it was not unlikely that such a site might be got from one of the affiliated colleges. That, I think, would not be an impossibility if a strong Committee were appointed. In connection with this proposal to build a new hall to provide for these common lectures, I have already the offer of the first £100 towards the expenses.

I do not think there is much to add. The proposal would need to be brought before the various Churches to get their consent, and what is suggested meantime—and this, too, I may say came from a member of the Commission who was not himself a Presbyterian—is that until we can get a common hall the authorities of Ormond College should be approached, to ask them whether they will place their class-rooms at the disposal of this inter-collegiate course of lectures. Ormond College is the only one that has class-rooms large enough to accommodate as many as 100 students, and if any steps were to be taken at once, before a new hall were provided, that would be the only College available. The idea would be to have a two years' course, carried on between the hours of 9 in the morning and 12, leaving the afternoon free for the students to attend their own colleges, and get extra denominational lectures from their own lecturers. There are one or two points that would need further consideration, one as to the constitution of the Board of Management. We have the illustration and example of the Canadian College before us to help to give us guidance in the matter. All that is suggested in this Report is (par. 5): "This common teaching might, perhaps, be provided and managed by a Board of Management, and a Senate representing the Churches and Colleges concerned, to be constituted as may afterwards be agreed." I have no doubt that if the Churches were willing, it would be easy to draw up a constitution. The question of the standard of entrance would require some attention. What we say here is: "Some agreement would need to be come to as to standard to be attained to before admitting to attend the common lectures at the hall, and how the examination for entrance into the Union Hall was to be conducted." It would only be reasonable, for example, that before admitting a student to New Testa-

ment Greek, he should have some knowledge of the rudiments of Greek, and be capable of profiting by the lectures, and the same with Hebrew and other subjects. A certain minimum standard of attainment should have been reached before the student could join the classes. Also, there would need to be some agreement as to the time when lectures would begin, when close, and what vacations should be given. These questions would need to be dealt with by any Committee appointed to further the matter. The appended time-table of this Report is merely tentative; it is not meant to be authoritative and final, but simply indicates how, with the existing staff, such a common course might be carried out. Of course, if this were being seriously contemplated by the Churches, it would need to be very carefully gone over. It is simply an indication of one way in which that could be accomplished.

As to our prospect of being able to accomplish anything practical in this direction, I should like to say that when I showed the scheme to the Vice-Chancellor of the Melbourne University, he said:—"There is no reason at all why such a scheme as this should not be carried through." That is the opinion of a practical man. It would serve three good purposes. It would conduce to greater efficiency in our theological education; we would have the services of all our staff available for the education of our students, and we would be able to divide the subjects better between them. It would make, also, for greater economy, because there is a waste of means in employing different lecturers to teach the same thing to a small number of students. Furthermore, it would be one of the best steps towards promoting the future unity of the Church, because, if you get the young men who are studying for the ministry of the Church to rub shoulders with each other, and to get to know one another's minds, and to sympathise with one another, they are the leaders of the Church in the days to come, and they will bring about that unity which will be to the glory of God and the advancement of His Kingdom.

REV. G. E. AICKEN.—At the opening of a Conference like this, it is important to determine what will be our best method of procedure. Shall we begin to work together when we can, or shall we talk about divergencies, and postpone co-operation until we be come into union? The mission-field lesson is that the best plan for the promotion and development of co-operation and unification is the immediate beginning to work together, in those things in which we can immediately co-operate. Here the conditions of the Mission-field are ahead of the conditions of the home base. In the Mission-field it has been discovered that co-operation can be begun immediately upon a very large number of vital subjects, such as Bible translation, the production and dissemination of Christian literature, the production of union hymn books, medical work, in which divergencies are not at all intrusive, linguistic training and training of teachers for Christian work in schools. The Mission-field has taught us that the best course for the production of the mind in which unity may develop is the immediate commencement of work, together in common, and, as Professor Adam has said already, there is no work in which the future atmosphere of co-operation and unification may be so immediately developed as in the work of training candidates for the ministry. We do not expect to solve the problem of the centuries in a few years, or in our own generation, but by training a body of students who have been brought together and taught to exchange their thoughts in common lecture rooms, we may create a generation of greater breadth and sympathy, who will carry on what we have done a stage further, for the sake of that vital union which we all desire in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I would like to explain the reason for the fundamental difference between the Anglican position and the position of the various Churches with whom we desire to co-operate as far as we can. Happily, I think, from the point of view of Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists, and others, the State is the unit, and therefore centralisation so far has been the custom with these bodies. In the Church of England, the diocese rather

than the province is the unit, and therefore we have these diverse diocesan centres in the various dioceses of Victoria. Several of them are for the most part preparatory, and in the last few years an increasing desire has been manifested to centralise round the University. Surely it is better that our theological students should be gathered together in the great centre of light and leading of the State—the University itself. We realise increasingly that it is not a good thing for the theological student to be brought up among a small group of fellow students, entirely removed from other fields of thought and enterprise. It is good that he should be compelled to stand for his faith in contact with others who may not be wholly in sympathy with him, and to get into sympathy with those whose approach to spiritual things is from a different starting point from his own. The chemical student may begin with the atom, and arrive at the aggregation of forces that form the atoms. Therefore we of the Anglican Church feel that it would be a good thing to have our theological education centralised, instead of dissipated as at present. In the last gathering of the Synod the subject of provincial centralisation was brought forward, and if centralisation can be brought about, the possibility of co-operation on our part with the other Churches will be made the more easy. At present we have three groups of students in Victoria—one not far from the University, one in the heart of the University, and one at some distance. It will be quite easy to bring all these students, with a little liberality of mind in the matter, to a focus either inside the University reserve, or, in the case of non-matriculated students, close to it, and in that case it would be possible for us to contribute the experts on our own teaching staff, and give what we have to give for the common benefit.

We stand very much in need at the present time of some standardisation of entrance examination before men commence their theological course. At present in our own Church we are suffering from diverse standards of entrance, and that means difficulty of co-ordination and relationship in subsequent teaching in the theological course. If you have a man who has taken honours in Greek, and a man studying the Greek of St. John, the teacher is under great disadvantage. I trust that this movement towards union may do something towards a general standardisation of entrance qualification, as well as subsequent standardisation of the actual curricula, particularly in those things in which combination may be effected.

REV. PROF. RENTOUL.—I do not like to speak so soon after another Presbyterian, but as this subject is of such importance, and as I judge that the subject has not yet been touched, I wish to speak, and I regret that I am limited to such a brief time. This is a fundamental question about the Church of God. It means the condition of the holy ministry, and a great Puritan said: "A miserable maintenance makes a miserable ministry, and a miserable ministry makes a miserable Church of God." The question apparently before us is the standardisation of the curricula, and also the combined theological education, and this report does not touch the standardisation of the curricula; it touches simply the standardisation of examinations, which is a very different thing. Then this which is put before you to-day is not at all a combined theological education. It is a combined system, very defective, as I shall show if I have time, and very destructive of the at present existing, and in some respects better, modes of education, by putting in their place a system of lectures by different people, broken, and having no necessary connection one with the other. Anyone who is an expert in teaching knows that it is the perpetual babitual nearness and closeness of the teacher to his pupils, and the getting acquainted one with the other, and the mode, that largely constitutes the effectiveness of teaching. Now, what we aim at is, of course, raising the standard of education for the holy ministry. That is set forth here—to raise the standard of theological education, and to unite the forces available towards this, by adopting such a system of co-operation as has been adopted with success in Montreal. I have not time to talk about Montreal.

I know about Canada, and it does not weigh with me, because it is owing to unusual and defective conditions that that has been brought into operation, and I shall have to speak probably in my own Church about that. In the first place, this is not a standardisation of curricula. It is simply, so far as the College of Divinity goes, a standardisation of examinations. There is not a word said in the Melbourne College of Divinity about curricula, except that if a man is going to get a degree he must pass an examination in theology. When you come to a combined theological education, it means simply a combined set of lectures so far as this scheme goes, and I will take that now. What is put before you, Dr. Adam says, is of course tentative only. Yes, but it is after long consideration the as yet only thinkable way of putting such a programme before you, and it means this, that whereas I at present appointed by my Church, and paid what some would consider a big salary to take the subject of Christian Philosophy and Apologetics, and the subject of Christian Training, and having to give seven hours to my students every week—a New Testament, junior and senior, would find that Dr. Leeper, instead of me, was the Professor in New Testament Greek for the first year junior, and that I was non-existent. Dr. Adam is good enough to locate some of the lectures in the afternoon. We know that students are tired in the afternoon, and you cannot teach them effectively. Then the senior students are delivered to me for two hours every week, whereas I have them now for four hours. Now, Dr. McFarlane said to Dr. Adam, that he did not see why this should not be run through, but he said a quite different thing to me, supplementing it. He said it might go through as a mere system of supplementary lectures, under which some of the students could go, for instance, to Dr. Leeper for lectures on one subject in which he is an expert, but the Churches would never stand it as a system of training. To make a combined system of theological education you must have an examination. Dr. Adam has admitted that. Professor Aickin has admitted it. I listened with great pleasure to the President yesterday speaking his beautiful generalities. I listened to Dr. Adam speaking his beautiful generalities. I listened to Dr. Aickin speaking his beautiful generalities. What we want in building a nation is practical statesmanship to master the difficulties, to project ourselves in some constructive system that shall build up statesmanship, and what we want to do in the case of students is to train them thoroughly before they go into a theological hall, and then to have adequate trainers set apart as experts in that particular subject for training them. It is simply a matter of looking at the facts, and the Commission have not looked at facts. We are all for union, and we cheer it, and it is beautiful, but we must not forget the existing systems, and the system at present within my Church is a seven years' training. You are going to suggest two years instead. We demand a degree at the University, or, if that is not possible in Australia, at any rate that the candidate shall have a four years' course, including Greek and Hebrew, and literature of various kinds, whereas this lays down as yet no necessary conditions for entrance at all. (The speaker read "Conditions of Entrance," as set forth in the Report under No. 6, for the Presbyterian, Anglican, Methodist, Congregational, and Baptist Churches.) In some cases this is not as much as a twelve-year-old child at a State School is expected to know. Now, I ask you in the name of reason what is the good of putting this programme before us, in which Dr. Leeper, an expert in Greek, will begin to teach students in junior Greek, where there is no condition laid down for previous examination as yet, and where in only one of the Churches has there been a course—and it is a four years' course—of preparing the student to be able to listen and understand what is going on? What is the good of all this unless you begin at the necessary standpoint of making young fellows receive even the simplest instruction in the original tongues of the Old and New Testament? Therefore I say if we are going to have combined lectures it will be a good thing. I will gladly fling myself into it,

but if you are going to haul down the splendid system of education that my Church, for example, has built up at great labour and pains, then I am against it, and the Church to which I belong will never even look at it. In a combined system of lectures as far as they can go I am with you, and will do my utmost, but do not put that before us as a standardisation of curricula, and do not put it before us as a combined system of theological education.

REV. PROF. SUGDEN.—Dr. Rentoul has asked for practicality. I stand here this morning as the representative of practicality. This thing has been done, as far as the Methodist and Congregational Churches are concerned, for some time past, and years before that it was carried out between the Methodist and the Baptist Colleges in Victoria, without the slightest hitch or difficulty of any kind whatever, to the great advantage of all parties concerned, I believe. I quite think we shall have to follow the lines Mr. Aickin has suggested; we shall have to take things as they come. I do not think we shall need to wait for the complete carrying out of this whole scheme before something very considerable will be done. I think it is extremely probable, from what I hear from Mr. Holdsworth, that next year, at all events, three of the Churches concerned will be working together. The Methodist, Congregational, and Baptist I think will next year be in a position to carry out this scheme so far as it is possible for three to do it, and after the declaration of Dr. Rentoul, that if this is to be considered as a system of supplementary lectures he will go in with it heart and soul, I think we need not even despair of having the advantage of his help and the association with us of Presbyterian students at a very early date.

With regard to one or two of his criticisms, let me say that when you prescribe an examination you do prescribe the curriculum. He is very emphatic in denouncing the Melbourne College of Divinity, of which he is Vice-President, for having done nothing in regard to curriculum and everything in regard to examinations. What is the difference? If you say, "At the end of the year you must pass an examination on these subjects in these particular books," you are prescribing a curriculum surely, and that is what the Melbourne College of Divinity has done. We allow a man to attend the examination without having attended lectures if he is foolish enough to do it, but if you are going to send your man in for the Melbourne College of Divinity degree you must follow its curriculum. We are taking our curriculum from the prospectus of the Melbourne College of Divinity, and it is the one thing we have endeavoured to standardise.

With regard to the attack upon the lack of any standardisation of the entrance examination, the Report itself is perfectly frank about that. The Report says this will have to be considered. This is an informal assembly which can only deal with generalities. It is easy to scoff at generalities and say we ought to come down to particulars. Are we to formulate the particulars of examinations for entrance to the Theological Hall? We are the worst body to do that. We simply say it will have to be considered. We recognise there must be an entrance examination, but this is not the place and the body to consider it, and the Commission therefore did not think it worth while to go into an amount of detail work concerning it. When the time comes, it will be effectively done. Of course one recognises that it would be a great loss to the theological students not to have the seven hours that Dr. Rentoul now gives them. If he cares to give seven hours a week for the whole of the united Colleges, I am sure there will be no difficulty raised. I shall be only too glad to have the assistance of other scholars, so as to devote myself to one or two special subjects, and be relieved of having more to do than I can at present manage. I think Dr. Rentoul, again, is not quite correct in saying that the denominational teaching is to be put into the afternoon. That is not the suggestion. Technically, I suppose, it is afternoon, twelve to one, but the contention that the students would object to that cannot

be sustained. They might object after three o'clock, but certainly there would be no objection to lectures between twelve and one. This thing is going to be done, and it will help of course if the meeting is able to put its imprimatur upon the suggestions of the Commission. The practical difficulty is the difficulty of accommodation, and I am sure there are laymen enough interested in the matter to follow Mr. Wootton's example and help us to get the Hall required. I do not think there would be any difficulty about the site. I am speaking without any sort of representative authority, but I think the existent Colleges, with their ten acres of ground apiece, would be quite ready to allow the erection of a hall or lecture-room on their grounds, and there would be no difficulty that I can see, legal or otherwise, in that respect, except that the hall so erected would be technically the property of the Council of the College on whose ground it was, but that is a matter in which we should be quite able to trust those concerned, and in the meantime it might perhaps be arranged that the Ormond authorities would let us have the use of their lecture rooms. I heartily go in with these proposals. I think a practical and immediate result is to come out of these gatherings, and I am quite sure such a scheme will be of the greatest service in promoting the future unity of the Church and brotherhood amongst its ministers. I agree heartily with what Mr. Aickin said about the necessity of having our theological students at the University.

REV. CANON HART.—I am sorry that I am going to be a little critical of the Report. I think, in the first place, it introduces an old, an out-of-date way of looking at reunion, from which our debates and the speeches already made in this Congress have been singularly free. There are two ways of thinking about reunion. There is the old unsectarian ideal, which believes that there is an essential of Christianity existing as a sort of nucleus within the doctrines of the different Churches, so that Anglicanism is Christianity plus something, and Presbyterianism is Christianity, plus something; the essential Christ is something less than any one denomination. Against that we have learned to set a different theory, which can perhaps best be expressed by a rather hackneyed quotation from Tennyson:

"Our little systems have their day,
They have their day and cease to be;
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they."

Thou, O Christ, art more than any one of the denominations. That is what we are trying to learn, that we differ from each other because we have not seen enough of the real meaning of Christ. And so we have learnt that what we want to do for reunion is to understand a great deal more of each other's point of view, and learn the truth which other denominations have held much more surely than we have ourselves: it is reunion by inclusion. I come to this Report, and I find the old unsectarian ideal, that there are certain essential subjects about which there is no controversy at all, and there are to be added to them what are called extra subjects. Professor Adam said, I think, extra subjects of a denominational kind. That is just the old unsectarianism come back again, and I do not believe in it a bit. I do not believe we are going to bring about union in an unsectarian way. Look at it directly and practically. Is it true that we all look at the New Testament the same way? When Anglicans and Presbyterians come to discuss their differences, how often do we find that they go back to the New Testament! It is a matter of interpretation that divides us. What about this New Testament course in the United College? It can be denominational or it can be neutral. It can look upon it from a purely historical standpoint, and not touch upon the denominational colouring at all or the interpretation which each Church wants to give, and then our student is left without just that instruc-

tion which, as a minister of a certain particular denomination, he needs. If you were going to a body of men who were simply studying from a historical and cold standpoint, that would be all very well, but what you want when you are training a clergyman is to give him just that particular strength and outlook which his denomination has. You will say: Surely better to make him broad and give him an all-round view! Yes. Suppose we take our inclusive view. The training we would then give would be to send the student to Professor Adam, and to Dr. Aickin, and so on, and let him catch the point of view of every denomination. No student could stand it, of course. Better to give him strongly the one aspect of truth his denomination holds and let him get red hot over that. Then as he gets older, and learns what the world is and how much bigger human nature is than he ever dreamt when a student, he will add the other colouring as well as he can, but I believe it is best to begin with a one side man. We say in our Church we are divided, high churchmen and low churchmen, but we find that if a man is going to be any good at all, he begins by being very strongly low or high, and when a young student comes out and has not any particular opinions and has not made up his mind what party he belongs to, he has not strength of any sort. It is just the same with denominations. It is perfectly true we want men to grow all their life time in breadth and depth of knowledge, but strong men begin by being red hot for some particular aspect of truth, and we get that best in a denominational college and a straight out denominational course. At the same time why should not the students of our different colleges mingle and rub shoulders, and compare the teaching of their different professors? I believe they are doing that, but I think all the same we should get the best results by intensity of culture on some definite line, rather than by admitting a general common broad course of instruction. I want to appeal to experience. Montreal is not experience yet, it is experiment, and we do not know whether it is going to work good or evil to the Church. Take the experience in the Church of England. I said it in the first "Fore-runner." The Church of England has for a long time been trying the experiment of uniting in the one Church men of radically different opinions. On the whole we have got along pretty well. We are not always quarrelling, as you might think. But we do not find it possible to have only one theological college. These different colleges you find here, seven in Victoria, are not altogether the result of diocesan organisation. To say it quite plainly: my good friend, the Bishop of Bendigo, thinks a good deal of me, but he does not want me to teach the Prayer Book to his students. That is the reason why we have different colleges. And why not? It is a very good thing indeed that in the one Church men should get the different ways of regarding truth, and I believe, instead of one college being a preparation for the one Church, even when we get the one Church there will be more than one college, and the only time you will be able to be satisfied with the one course of theological training for the whole Church will be when the Church is not learning any new truth, when, therefore, men's minds have all got into one mould and are making no theological progress.

THE PRESIDENT.—It may be a matter of information to some of you, just bearing on this matter, that the theological students of all the colleges have a union already amongst themselves, in which there is most perfect amity and friendship. It has been the privilege of some of us to be invited on various occasions to go to these group meetings of students, and we have found existing amongst the men the utmost courtesy and friendship—a very, very hopeful sign indeed.

At this stage the Congress adjourned until 3 p.m.

THE PRESIDENT called upon the Rev. W. S. Rolland to open the meeting by prayer.

MR. W. M. BUNTINE.—Mr. President and members of the Congress—The discussion of this important question has so far been entirely by the Churches, and I make bold to be the first layman to venture in and offer a suggestion. I feel sure that this splendid proposal, put before us by Commission No. 2, if submitted to the laymen of our Churches would be very heartily supported indeed, and I feel, moreover, that the establishment of the proposed union of the Theological Colleges would be a fitting answer to many of the taunts which are thrown to-day at Church people about their unhappy divisions, and I feel that laymen would be ready to do their part, as suggested already by our worthy honorary secretary, in finding a means to build this new Palace of Peace.

I have to suggest in regard to what has been said already that I hope we shall, out of this Conference, be able to make a suggestion for a higher standard of education in our Theological College. We all of us know very well that we live in times when educational matters are advancing by leaps and bounds. The standard of twenty-five years ago can no longer be accepted as the standard of to-day, nor can the standard of to-day for a moment be thought of as sufficient standard for ten, or even five years to come. We must, therefore, make sure that we lay down as a standard for entrance to our Theological College such a standard as will be worthy of the days in which we live. I think we should aim at matriculation as the standard for entrance to our College. Of course, I am quite well aware that it is impossible to obtain all the men we need for Church work; students are not forthcoming, as they should be, and therefore the non-matriculated student will be with us for many days to come. I think if we established a good sound course of Theological education, such as would appeal to the intelligent students amongst us, we should find far more ready to take up the course. The dearth of students may be put forward as a reason for the low standard, but I think the low standard may also be a reason for the dearth of students. The non-matriculated students make it necessary for us to have hostels or colleges outside the University, for, as most of us are aware, it is not the custom for students to reside at the University if they have not matriculated. I think that in any recommendations that may come from this Conference, it should not be forgotten to emphasise the need for maintaining our Theological Colleges and hostels outside the University grounds. There is great need for them because of the non-matriculated students; also because we need denominational teaching, such definite teaching as we were hearing about from Canon Hart, and further, the third reason, and perhaps the most important one why we should emphasise the need for maintaining our existing colleges would be that we need to maintain in them a definite spiritual atmosphere for our students. We all know what a demand University work makes upon us, or shall we say, the work in the Theological College, and we know how chilling it is when all our energies are called forth in the pursuit of examinations, and temptations are offered to neglect prayer, and spiritual life dies down. There is need, therefore, for our men to keep in contact with each other and keep warm in the spiritual life.

My two points, then, are just these—first, make a demand for a high standard for entrance into our Theological College, and, secondly, maintain our Theological Colleges and places where a spiritual atmosphere may be kept up, and our students may be backed up and helped in their spiritual life.

MR. LIONEL LEWIS.—I must confess that it is with a certain amount of hesitation that a layman enters into a debate on the subject before us, which is one, to a great extent, for experts, yet it would be a serious evil for the laymen not to take an interest in a subject of such vital import-

ance as the training of the students for the ministry. I must say that I read the report with a certain amount of misgiving; it impressed me with the idea that it was really like putting a plant, so to speak, from one building to another instead of building up afresh upon our present systems. In the criticism of it I would have hesitated to venture but for the example set by such a warrior as Dr. Rentoul, and also by Canon Hart. It seems to me that it would be a pity not to make the best of this great opportunity; this consideration of the course for ministers gives us an opportunity for bringing it up to date. It seems there is too much tendency to force all students through one groove, and there is a tendency in that manner to thwart originality and individual genius. Now just off-hand, I might mention, or ask, is there any course that provides, say, for the special study of prophecy and its fulfilment; is there a course for the special study of each of the great religions of the world in their contrast with Christianity? I believe that there is a survey taken of all of them, but is there any course that deals specially with any particular religion, so that those who study that course become experts? I think there is a great scope in that direction. I just mention that for the consideration of those who have to deal more intimately with the subject than the ordinary layman.

In conclusion, I think there is a suggestion that might be made, and one which certainly wants some consideration, and that is with regard to laymen. I think there are many laymen, and some with whom I have come into contact, who would make excellent preachers; we have no means of training such men to a certain extent and bringing them into the service of the Church. Now, my idea is this, and I think it a very practical field for bringing the Churches into closer touch with one another, suppose we seek out laymen with special merit, and who will have a special message to deliver on some branch of life, and who shall be chosen by the whole Church, and ordained in their office by all branches of the Christian Church, and be available for service in any Church; I think there we have the means at our hands of doing something towards bringing the Churches into closer touch with one another. The proposals before us to-day as regards the training of students have many difficulties, in fact they are bristling with difficulties, as we must expect them to be, but all the same we must not cast them aside; in the meantime let us do what we can. Of course, there has been no proposal made for the adoption of this report, but can we not thank the Commission heartily for their work, for the time and thought they have devoted to it, and refer it to them again for further consideration in the light of what has been brought forward to-day, and then consider it in the Synods, and Senates, and Conferences of our various Churches. I think that is the wiser course. I am not one who believes in casting it aside. I want to go back to Geelong and be able to point to some definite result attained in each branch of the work with which we are dealing these three days. But let us build upon sound progressive lines. Let us make sure of what we are doing, and that it is such as we can commend to our brethren in all branches of the Church.

REV. LEYTON RICHARDS.—In one sense I speak as a layman, that is to say, I am not on the College staff, although I happen to be chairman of the Congregational College Committee. I stand here, although I am not a member of the Commission, as a whole-hearted supporter of the conclusion to which the Commission has come. I think there has been a certain division in the remarks, and I am rather puzzled to know whether Mr. Buntine and Mr. Lewis are in favour or against this report. There have been three lines of objection taken, the first by Dr. Rentoul, who declared that the scheme was inadequate in that it did not provide for that continuity of the education of the students under the personal control of the same professors. It is the first time in my experience that I have known a Professor anxious to teach the elements, they generally pass the students on to minor teachers, but Dr. Rentoul is most zealous, and would teach them from the beginning.

Then another line of criticism was that taken by Mr. Lewis, that it tended to suppress diversity, that the students would all be pushed through the same groove, and diversity would thus be suppressed.

The third line of criticism was that adduced by Canon Hart, who condemned the scheme to some extent on the ground that it was destructive of that red-hot quality, a hybrid of denominationalism. He thought each student should come under the heat of ultra-super-denominationalism, and that later on when he mixed with his fellow-students and fellow-men the sharp corners of denominationalism would be rubbed off. Dr. Rentoul and Canon Hart made an appeal to experience, and the former dismissed the Montreal example as not being experienced. I would also appeal to experience, and if I may be permitted to say so, it is an experience with which I am personally familiar, and it is an experience that has been proceeding for more than a quarter of a century in one of the ancient Universities of Great Britain. I refer to Oxford; there was established in the eighties, Mansfield College, the first public Free Church College to be established in that ancient University. Now, to take the lines of criticism in order—first we have it that it destroys the continuity of the student's touch with his Professors. At Mansfield College the men are sent by their tutors to attend lectures given by different Professors of all denominations. I was sent to attend lectures by Dr. Caird, in Philosophy—he was a Presbyterian. I was placed under Sir Henry Jones at Manchester College, and he was a Welsh Calvinistic Anglican and students of all denominations attended, and in this way the actual touch of tutor and taught was for ever being diversified, and yet it had preserved that continuity of personal touch, and my point is this, that under this scheme the personality of the principal or head of each college co-operating will be impressed upon the students who have to go to one man for such and such a thing, and to another for other subjects, and we will thus have continuity as well as diversity.

DR. RENTOUL.—My main contention was that whereas the Presbyterian course of training was for seven years, this project appoints a two years' course only.

PROFESSOR ADAM.—The scheme does not at all propose to cut down the course of training by three or four years. The two years' course provided for is not to be in substitution for the three or four years; after the students have gone through the two years they will still have to go through the other three years' course, and then the Professors of Ormond and the other Colleges would have them all to themselves.

REV. LEYTON RICHARDS.—Now I come to the question of diversity, and to the assertion that it would put all students through the same groove. Surely that is a mistaken idea. Again let me refer to Oxford. Students are there trained for the Arts Degree, or the Divinity Degree of London, etc., and this scheme really arranges for uniformity in regard to examinations, not a uniformity as regards the curriculum. Each man is able to choose which degree he will go for, and there are abundant subjects.

Then the final criticism of Canon Hart, that it would destroy that intensity which was essential. I do not know that the red-hot men after all have always come out well. I am rather of the opinion that the red or white heat burns itself out and leaves a man a cinder. We have had men like Edwin Goss, brought up in a perfervid atmosphere. Where are they to-day? I do not think that the engendering of a perfervid denominationalism is at all necessary. My experience has been that every student who gives himself up to the work has already a superabundance of perfervid red heat to commence with. The training he receives ought to give to his judgment that vigour and balance and energy necessary in appropriating not merely those elements which are provided by his own perfervid feelings, but also those other elements which alone can be provided by some interdenominational scheme. Therefore, against the three criticisms—that it would destroy continuity of personal touch;

destroy diversity of educational development, and also that intensity of denominational fervour necessary, I venture to uphold the conclusions of the Commission No. 2.

DR. E. J. STUCKEY (Visiting missionary from Peking, China).— I also speak as more or less uninstructed in the question, but I would like to give you some practical experiences of the mission field. I think for some of the leaders of our Churches, especially those who are prominent in a denominational sense, it would be a liberal education for them to have to work for some eight or nine years on the mission field. In Peking I have had the honour for the last three and a half years of being the president of a college in which are united eight missionary societies, and we do not find any difficulty whatever in uniting. In Peking we have a college also in which the London Missionary Society and the American Bible Institution and others unite, and they have arranged the curriculum in such a way that they do not find it necessary to give a special course of lectures on denominational subjects; there is one course given to all students equally. That college has been in existence for seven years, and the experience we have gained in that work has been so satisfactory that recently the English Methodist Society and the American Episcopal Society have also made approaches to our Union Theological College, suggesting that they would be glad also to unite in the work of the College. Just before I came away, we were engaged on a scheme for uniting all the missions of the province in a Union University, and the proposal was that we should have a Theological Hall for all denominations together, and this is the attitude which is being adopted all over the mission fields to-day.

As regards the difficulty of having students of different degrees of training, we also find that on the mission field, and if the proposal goes through, we will have two classes of students, one going to the University, and the present Theological College, which is in another part of the city, will be used as a Bible Institute for the training of those Chinese students who have not had a sufficient elementary education to enable them to take a full course of theological training.

Our experience on the mission field is that the whole tendency is certainly towards union, not only in ordinary education, but also in theological education, and such a scheme as has been prepared here would meet the needs of our difficulties on the mission field. I have given this as just a little practical experience.

REV. JOHN WALKER.—I did not quite catch the idea that Canon Hart had in mind. It seems to me that if there was anything in his contention, it was that any union with regard to education was not to be desired, that the one thing desired was intense denominationalism. Of course, that is a perfectly conceivable decision, but it is doubtful whether it should be a final decision. I think that in the Presbyterian Church the ideal for the education of its clergy has been to educate a man with as wide an outlook as possible, that is to say, men who were in intelligent touch with the systems of thought and government and the ideals of all branches of the Church. I think, indeed, that the ideal of the Presbyterian Church has been not towards the narrow denominationalism, and I believe we have never thought that we could not have intensity without narrowness, and I certainly do not believe that narrowness is necessary for intensity. I believe this system which has been suggested will have very great advantages; it will have the practical advantage of bringing the future teachers in the various Evangelical and Protestant Churches into touch at that time of life when they are susceptible to forming human friendships, and that is a thing of the very greatest value. If we can get our men to know each other, and each other's point of view and enthusiasms it will be of the very greatest advantage to the Churches of Christ in the future. Whatever form of union or co-operation may eventuate, I do not think that we need at all fear that such a proposal as this will work towards any dead uniformity. Those who know much

about young men know that there is a good deal of the personal element and a good deal of self-assertiveness in them; there is always a good deal of difference between men in the same Church, and rather than any change of this sort working towards uniformity in training, it will certainly work towards sympathy and understanding. I believe that three-fourths of the things that keep us apart as Christians rest upon misunderstanding and a lack of knowledge. I know that in my own case the more I have got to know personally my brethren in the other Churches, the less have I found to find fault with. Of course, we all have the idea that our own branch of the Church is the finest, but one's mind gets greatly disabused of that when you get to know men better; if our teachers were in close touch with each other, the feeling would be very much improved. I know one practical case of a Methodist minister in Victoria who had the inestimable advantage of taking part of his theological training in the Presbyterian Hall; now I find that man a very enthusiastic Methodist, but with a very warm and cordial side towards Presbyterian ministers and Presbyterians generally, and I know quite well that if he meets a Presbyterian he meets a man whom he feels he knows fairly well. We want more of that feeling right throughout the ministry, and, further, we want enthusiasm and fire in all our work but not the narrow denominational fire. What we want enthusiasm for is the coming of the Kingdom of Christ and the doing of His will, and I believe that one of the great results of some form of real union between the different branches of the Churches of Christ would be that a great deal of time which is now wasted on purely sectarian enthusiasm would be set free to be expended in the highest forms of evangelical enthusiasm for the bringing in of the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I admit that around this question there are tremendous difficulties, practical more than theoretical, difficulties resulting from prejudices which have come to us during the years which we have inherited, and it will probably take a good while to bring about any close form of union, but I am convinced that everything we can do in that direction must be in accordance with the will of Christ. I agree with Dr. Rentoul with regard to the need for an entrance examination, but that is a thing with which this Commission can deal with seriously and perhaps make some definite proposals.

I do feel that from this scheme there must work good to the individuals and to the Churches, which will be a large contribution to that for which we long and pray, the coming of a closer union and the realisation that we are all one in Christ Jesus.

REV. W. H. FITCHETT.—I feel very like an imposter—I think our difficulty is that we are all agreed; I do not think that if this matter was put to the vote even our friend Dr. Rentoul, who enjoys being in the minority, would be against it. This runs right in the line of each of our sympathies and our best judgment, and we have a great precedent before us in Canada, where the great stream of immigration compelled the Churches to feel that in order to do their work they must unite. If we had the same stream of immigration and work beyond our power to grapple with, we should be further on the road towards union. At two points, Toronto and Montreal, they are doing this very thing, and here is the point—when they attempted to do this they discovered that the conscience of the Churches was on their side, and consequently the enthusiasm of the Churches also was on their side; and there is no point in which they are showing their enthusiasm more than on this one of co-operating in their training institutions.

I say this, that if the ministry of all our Churches is trained in this way, at the most impressionable and susceptible time of their life and knitted together by general knowledge, you will unite the Churches tomorrow. I think we cannot do anything else than accept this scheme, and take a vote on it and then send it to our Churches. We shall then discover its limitations and amend same. However, the first step for us in this Congress is to heartily declare in favour of this scheme.

REV. F. V. PRATT.—First, with regard to Canon Hart, I do not think that justice has been done to his point of view, and I do not take it that Canon Hart is against union; that certainly was not his attitude on the Commission, but he is, I think, what might be called a true historical Anglican. Now, the essence of the Anglican position is this, that it is always on the side of comprehensiveness. Canon Hart pointed out that within the one comprehensive Anglican Church in Victoria there are three bodies, and his point is that you may have a comprehensive union but still a number of colleges; union of Church does not necessarily mean one college; you can have a union and many colleges if that be desirable, and I think that point ought to be made clear. Canon Hart was not opposed to the spirit of unity or to their efforts towards unity.

Having said so much in favour of what Canon Hart said, I want now to say a good deal against it. In the first place, I utterly disagree in regard to his standard of teaching New Testament Greek; it is against the very spirit of Anglican scholarship; their principle was the very opposite—they take the New Testament documents, and with such light and all the resources of scholarship at our command try to get at the very thoughts of the writers, and that is the only thing possible to a scholar belonging to any Church. I do not see why Dr. Rentoul should not teach all our Congregational students New Testament Greek, and I, for one, would be truly thankful if he should do so.

I was on the Commission that drew up this report, and very fully sympathise with it. I quite agree with what Mr. Buntine has said that we should make matriculation at least our entrance standard. I very heartily support the Commission.

REV. A. R. STEPHENSON.—I am also interested in the Congregational College, and as Dr. Fitchett said just now, I feel that the general sense of the meeting is one of kindly agreement and hearty union on this question of the co-operation of the different colleges. The Congregational College has already been doing some of this union work. It may not be known to all, but the Methodist students for a great many years have come down to our Hall to receive lectures, and our students have gone to their Hall for the same purpose. I myself have had the pleasure of lecturing to a number of Methodist students, and it has been with great advantage that our students have gone to Queen's for lectures, and it has never in the slightest degree modified the red-hot denominational enthusiasm the students get at certain periods of their lives; on the other hand, that has been warmly maintained and rather increased than otherwise. I think we ought not so much to try and maintain red heat in the denominational line, but rather in the line, which is larger and broader, of the Christian Kingdom. We come here rather to help to bury some of those distinctions which separate in order that we may rise from that to something of the life of Him Who rose from the dead.

There has been a lot of discussion as to what the curriculum of the College shall be, but we can make the curriculum what we like afterwards. I think we always spend a lot of sessions in allowing for exceptions, and anyone who has had anything to do with College work will find that they take up as much room in allowing for exceptions as we are at present in discussing the question of matriculation for entrance. I do trust that your efforts will be successful and that it will help to lift our students to higher educational spheres.

REV. W. D. McLAREN (Professor of the Congregational College).—I only want to point out for a moment that the report of the Commission No. 2 may be justified from a rather unexpected point of view, namely, the denominational point of view. The preservation of whatever denominational principles we hold, and rightly hold, as they are a heritage from our fathers, ought not to be thrown away for a temporary union, and is better conserved by just such a scheme as is now propounded. I think that the findings of this Commission may be justified on the ground that they give the advantage of combination without its disadvantages.

Apart from the atmosphere which can still be maintained, the special teaching relative to the true or practical emphasis of the several denominations gets a much better chance of more time to itself, more elaboration and more emphasis rightly laid upon it in comparison with its fellows, than when these are simply part of their ordinary theological course. More attention will be given to whatever is good and true and important and permanent in our special views.

I also would urge that if this scheme be adopted, or brought before our denominational institutions for their acceptance, that it be pled not merely on the more popular ground, but also before the saner and more conservative members who are keen on their denominations, on the ground that it is a true conservative as well as a true progressive policy.

REV. J. C. MARTIN.—I only came here this afternoon in answer to a request from the President of our College in order that the Baptist voice should not altogether be silent at this gathering. The Principal and Professors are, unfortunately, absent from the meeting, and we think you ought to get the Baptist point of view. I cannot speak because of any discussion the matter has had at our own College, or in our own denomination, but I believe that our people will be found to be fully sympathetic towards this effort for union. We recognise that although sometimes it may seem that our particular principles are a bar to union as far as we can possibly go, our people may be expected to fall in. We have always worked in the past, as far as possible, with the representatives of other denominations, and if some workable scheme can be evolved in the direction of a common college training, we shall be glad to be associated with it. I quite recognise that there are difficulties, and some of these will start in connection with the course itself. For instance, in dealing with the common standard for theological students, it is desired that the standard shall be raised as far as possible. Now we are prepared to do that, but we can only go as far as our Constitution will allow us. We have to take into account the denominational feeling, and to remember that some of the denominations have quite different ideas about the ministry to others. For example, we have to emphasise in the training of our students, the fact of preaching ability being discovered before the man enters the College at all, and we are increasingly putting the emphasis there; we expect a man to show not merely academic powers, but that he will show by his preaching powers that he is called to be a preacher, and that requires that a certain amount of time shall be spent before he enters for training. But we recognise that we have got to raise the standard right throughout our States, and perhaps for us it is a little more involved than for some of the other Colleges; students are received from every State of the Commonwealth, and we expect if we carry this, as we hope to do, that it will affect the situation not as far as Victoria alone is concerned, but as far as Australia is concerned. I do not believe that any man can tell how far the work of to-day, and of this Congress will go; it will be of magnificent service to the whole work of God if we can come to a union. I think we have made a slight mistake in rather elaborating the scheme put before the Congress, and I do not think we ought to have drawn it up as we have done, so elaborately, or, at any rate, it ought to be explained, that this is purely on paper to show the practicability of the scheme. I believe that there are features in the address of Dr. Rentoul which must be taken into account. We should think it absolutely necessary that our students should be allowed to attend some lectures, and not to attend others. All that we can have just now, however, is a general agreement and approval of the scheme, and that is all we can ask for to-day and during the Congress; and, as far as this approval goes, I think I can stand for our denomination. We believe that if men can be called to give special lectures, and the young men of the Churches can have a common training under these experts, it can only be to the benefit of every Church associated with the work.

REV. F. J. NANCE.—I have hesitated to take any part in these dis-

cussions because our point of view was most adequately put by the Rev. Mr. Sugden this morning. There are, however, one or two points on which I should just like to say a few words. I wish to express my hearty concurrence with Dr. Rentoul on the necessity of endeavouring to raise the standard of training. I do not see in this particular suggestion that there is anything at all that interferes with any one of us doing all we can to forward this effort towards union as far it can possibly go. The individual freedom of the denominations is perfectly preserved, in my judgment of the scheme, and if any one of the Churches desires seven or seventy years' training there is nothing of this course that in the slightest degree interferes with that. It seems to me that this scheme is simply to provide for a two years' course of united training in the whole series, to be followed by two or five years as desired. The purpose of it is that for two years of the theological training the whole of the students should come together in the course of study and have the help of expert teachers and of the best tutors. I have looked in vain to find any practical difficulty in the way of this attempt in the way of union, and on my own part, and I am sure from what has been said by those who represent the Methodist Church that we shall most heartily concur in any effort of this sort. Of course, we must provide, at the same time, for those necessarily exceptional cases to which Mr. Stephenson made reference, but it is advised that each Church should have the power to deal with its own students.

I desire, on my own part, and on the part of my brethren as far as I am able to speak, to express our hearty concurrence in the report of this Commission.

With regard to the desire of maintaining the denominational adherence of our students, I am not aware that there has ever been the slightest endeavour or approach to any interference in the denominational adherence of students, and I do not understand how such a thing can come into the mind of any brother.

MR. W. A. SANDERSON.—I think we are an important Church in this community, and I also think that it is just as well that some of the laymen should be heard as well as the clergy. First of all, I have been bred as a Presbyterian, and I have no immediate hopes of union of the Churches—I do not think I shall see it in my day, but, on the other hand, what I do look to see is their working together in matters of practical utility, and I see in this scheme which is put before us something in that direction. I have examined this scheme well, and if I were a student preparing for the ministry, I would feel, as a Presbyterian, that I could attend the course of lectures such as set forth, and I think that any intelligent Presbyterian who would study this scheme would come to the same conclusion. Under these circumstances, I would like to support the general idea of this scheme. We must talk in generalities, and later on we may find a working basis; we cannot go into details in a body like this. No doubt there will be a large number of difficulties, but they will not be insurmountable, in my opinion. It may take some time to do it. Of course, it is ridiculous to look upon this two years' course as being all the training a man is to get. Why, he has three years at the University, and that is part of the training, the two years here, and another in his own denominational training. I must say there was one speaker to whom I listened with great pleasure, Mr. Richards put the position very plainly indeed. He spoke about the different lecturers belonging to different denominations to which he had been sent in order that he might equip himself for his life's training. There is another thing, the text books are written by men of different denominations, and if we can have men of all different denominations writing our text-books, why should we not have them to lecture to us. I have known students of one denomination who have gone to hear a preacher of another denomination in order to get inspiration. I have heard the Rev. A. R. Edgar say that many a time he went to the old Gaelic Church, at

Carlton, to get inspiration for his sermon. There was a Wesleyan going to hear a Presbyterian. I also agree with what another speaker said about the New Testament Greek. I think that our revised Bible shows that different scholars have been able to co-operate and work together. This scheme meets with my heartiest approval, and I hope it does with that of the other Presbyterian laymen here.

REV. PROFESSOR ADAM.—I do not think it will be necessary for me to say very much by way of reply. I think that the discussion we have had cannot but be gratifying to this Commission, and to those gentlemen who had a hand in preparing this report, because on the whole there has been practical unanimity and agreement in favour of the main ideas of this report. Of course, I explained at the beginning that we did not wish to commit the Congress at all to the details of the scheme that was drawn up here; we merely were illustrating how the thing might be carried out, and all that we ever thought of asking the Congress to do was to give its general approval, as Mr. Martin has correctly anticipated, of the principles underlying this proposal. In regard to the good-natured criticism to which our proposals have been submitted I do not think it necessary to say very much. I am sorry Dr. Rentoul is not with us just now. He was a member of the Commission, but, unfortunately, was not able to attend any of the meetings, and, therefore, was not perhaps as well acquainted with the discussions and details of the proposal as he might have been had he been able to attend the meetings. Of course, it was quite a miscomprehension on his part that this two years' course was proposed as a substitute for the existing curriculum in the various colleges—that would never have been dreamt of. Of course, this proposal is not intended to interfere in any way with the regulations of the existing Churches in regard to their College curriculum. In Montreal in the united course of lectures there is nothing to interfere in any way with how many years they shall have, and what lectures and examinations they must attend, and so on; that is a matter for the regulations of the several Churches. All that this scheme proposes is that for two years there shall be an undenominational course of lectures offered to the students. Thus in the Baptist Church they might not think it necessary to impose Hebrew upon their students as a compulsory subject, and the student would not be under the necessity of attending the class, and, in like manner, Patristics. It is absolutely necessary that the Churches should be allowed to direct their own students. In the scheme submitted by the affiliated colleges there are optional lectures given at almost every hour; for example, in the hour that Patristics are given it might be necessary to arrange for some optional subject to be taken for those who do not take Patristics. Dr. Rentoul, of course, had the idea that it would put an end to the close continuity of the students with their teachers, and that this two years' course was to take the place of the present course. I am afraid he must have forgotten the paper I submitted showing that this was intended to fit in with the other training, and that after the two years' course there would still be the three years at the University, when the Professors of Ormond would have their own students to themselves.

And so with regard to the entrance examination, the reason why we did not submit a detailed proposal was that we felt that we were not the proper parties to go into the details; that is for the Churches. We could not do it without consultation with the Churches. We could not draw up a scheme for an entrance examination, but that is a most important matter which can only be done when the heads of the Colleges get together and find out what the requirements are.

I move a resolution that this scheme be generally approved, and later on it will be proposed that a Committee be appointed and that Committee shall be instructed to bring the suggestions of the Congress before the several Churches. In regard to that I am not quite sure about the position of the Presbyterian Church. I think that our State

Assembly would have power to deal with this. The Colleges are the property and under the control of the State Assemblies, and I think if we could bring the matter before the State Assembly and get their sanction it would be well, otherwise we would have to wait for another year. I think if this could be brought, without undue delay, before the Churches, it is very desirable that such should be done. There is a proposal for the Methodists, Congregationalists and Baptists to begin with some such scheme as this for next year, and I think it would be a pity for three to begin without a combined scheme being entered into. I have much pleasure in moving that we approve generally of this scheme proposed by Commission No. 2.

This resolution was seconded and carried.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, 3RD SEPTEMBER, 1913.

The meeting opened with prayer.

THE PRESIDENT remarked upon the interest which the Congress meetings were creating in other States, and reported that letters had been received from Sydney and from Boulder City, also a telegram from Brisbane, sending greetings and expressing a wish to be kept posted in the deliberations of the Congress.

He called upon Rev. Leyton Richards to present Report of Commission No. 1 on "The Union Control of Home Missions."

REV. LEYTON RICHARDS.—In presenting this report to this Congress, I should first of all like to express, in the name of my fellow-members of the Commission, a very hearty appreciation of those who have been good enough to act as witnesses before the Commission. Their courtesy could not have been exceeded. They submitted with far better grace than the ordinary Parliamentary candidate to a heckling of a by no means easy order, and the good-will and brotherly feeling that prevailed in every meeting of the Commission was, I felt personally, an augury of the success which I think will attend our recommendations.

Now, there are two broad facts which have emerged after taking all our evidence. You will find the evidence here is presented in full, and our business as a Commission was to talk this over, discuss it, grasp if we could the essential points, boil it down, and present certain recommendations. The first broad fact is the existence of serious overlapping. If you turn to page 43 you will find under the report of Mr. Cameron, the Home Mission Agent of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, the question: "Generally speaking, do you not think there is a good deal of overlapping? Answer.—No, I do not. And when you speak of the waste of Home Mission Money, and then see the numbers who attend the strong central congregations, I do not think there is very much strain on them. The whole State is not yet adequately supplied with services." It may seem that the report of the Commission has to some extent ignored or overridden the opinion of an expert like Mr. Cameron, but I wish to say the Commission has taken full cognisance not only of Mr. Cameron's statements with regard to overlapping, but also the statements made by the representatives of the other four Churches who gave evidence in regard to Home Mission work. The apparent discrepancy arises from this fact, that Mr. Cameron's definition of overlapping is not the definition which I think is accepted by the majority of Christian men and women in this State, and certainly not the definition accepted by this Commission on the Union Control of Home Missions. On page 42 you will find Mr. Cameron saying: "I know some Presbyterians who are so bigoted, so loyal, that they never attend anything but their own service. If I found there were twenty families like that I would consider they had a right to their own service." That is to say, if you get twenty bigoted families in one communion, they have a right to separate services, to the erection of a Home Mission Station, and, therefore, to be

subsidised by a Home Mission Fund. Now, the Commission takes a different view of the nature and existence of overlapping, and that view is expressed in the paragraph which appears under Section 1 of the report. Everything turns upon this definition of overlapping, and we speak of it in respect of these four qualifications:—1. The total population of the district served. You may have twenty families in a given district, but what proportion do they bear to the total population of the district served? You must ask that before you can say that these twenty have a right to indulge in competitive services, for that is what in effect they come to be. Suppose they are only $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., or 2 per cent., or 3 per cent. Does 3 per cent. warrant the erection of an ecclesiastical organisation in that district? 2. The extent of the territory comprised in the district. Many of our Home Mission districts are only the name round which a great district coheres. It depends on the size of the district, and whether they are all able to come to the centre where the facilities may be placed. 3. The numerical strength within the district of each denomination represented, with especial reference to the relative numbers of Protestants and Roman Catholics. It is no good merely to take population. The Roman Catholics of this State form $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the total population. In some districts they constitute roughly one-half, or even more, of the total population. Obviously, in estimating whether there is overlapping between the various Protestant denominations we must take into account not merely the total population, but the total Protestant population. 4. The location within the districts of the several churches or facilities for worship. In certain districts there are four churches, but two of them are opposite each other in the street, another just round the corner—all four placed together in the centre of a district which may have an area of ten miles square, that is, 100 square miles altogether. All these four factors, as well as the mere existence of the numerical strength of your own particular denomination, have to be taken into account in estimating what we mean by overlapping. The Commission had in view all these qualifications and not merely the question as to whether or not there was a certain competition between the denominations. As to the extent of overlapping it is somewhat difficult to speak. A report has been prepared by the Rev. Samuel Bryant, assisted by Rev. W. Christiansen. Its object is not so much to enlighten this Commission as to be of assistance to the Continuation Committee, which we hope will be able to carry out the recommendations. On the map the five Churches are represented; Church of England, by amber beads; Presbyterian, by blue; Methodist, by green; Baptist, by light brown; Congregational, by red. The beads are not supposed to indicate the character of the denominations represented. They are placed upon the different centres to indicate as far as possible where the different denominations exist, and if you look at the map you can see where there is and where there is not overlapping. That estimate of overlapping does not include the Salvation Army, the Churches of Christ, the Brethren, or the Roman Catholics; it only has reference to the five reporting denominations in this report of Commission No. 1. Obviously, therefore, that is by no means a complete pictorial representation of the overlapping which exists, because it is not confined to these five contracting denominations. Even in regard to these five, it is difficult to say how far the overlapping goes; even the Home Mission agents are unable to tell us exactly what places they cover, especially the Methodist Church, which does so much in the way of lay preaching and itinerant preachers where it is impossible to obtain the services of an ordained minister. But there are, roughly speaking, between 3000 and 4000 preaching stations or centres—nearer 4000 places of worship (sometimes a hall) utilised by these five denominations. Of the 4000, we estimate that there are 300 cases of serious overlapping; nearly 10 per cent. That does not mean that in all the remaining cases the overlapping can be ignored. There is a tendency there, and we have to deal with that as well as the fact. I may just cite one or two cases without giving the exact names.

Here is a place where there is a population of 200 plus; (to indicate that there may be a slightly larger population I add the word "plus," as it is difficult to get the exact population of our ecclesiastical districts; they naturally do not in all cases coincide with the political districts). With that total population, men, women, children and babes in arms, there are three churches. In another, 201 is the total population given. There are four churches—Baptist, Presbyterian, Church of England and Methodist. Here is one with a population of 104—Methodist, Presbyterian, Church of England—three churches. Here is a case of a population of 130, and there are three churches—Methodist, Presbyterian and Church of England. The list could be extended pretty well up to 300. I saw last week, by the religious papers brought over from England, that it had been estimated that in Great Britain the amount of funds uselessly expended on overlapping amounted to no less than £2,000,000 per annum. That takes no account of the waste of human exertion and energy. I do not know what the proportion would be of the £2,000,000 to the total ecclesiastical expenditure for Great Britain, but I am sure the proportion for Victoria would not be less. The tendency in a new country like this with rapid expansion is not to decrease overlapping, but to increase it.

The second main fact is that the present methods of Church extension naturally tend to increase and encourage overlapping. That is no reflection whatever upon any single denomination. One and all have to cry "Peccavi." It is not for those who live in glass houses to throw stones. Perhaps that is too strong a word. It is inadvertent; it has not been done deliberately, wilfully, and shutting our eyes to the true glory of the Kingdom of God. It is rather an undirected zeal for the Kingdom and on account of the want of cohesion that the present system naturally tends to overlap. That is borne out without a single exception by all the experts who gave evidence on Home Mission matters before the Commission. A new district opens up, and at once we go in, in order to shepherd our own flock so far as we can and funds will allow, and that tends to a condition of competition and denominational rivalry, which is really a reproach to the Church, and it is to redeem the Church of Christ from that reproach that this Commission is presenting this report. What is the remedy? The obvious remedy, which we wish might be fully applied, is the remedy of organic union. That would solve all our difficulties. With one Church an administrative centre directing operations throughout the whole State, it would be possible to prevent this rivalry, but this Commission was not charged with the task of presenting a heroic remedy. Our task was practical, not to lay down ideals, but rather to see whether something cannot be done here and now, before the day comes when organic union may be possible, to remedy these evils, and, therefore, we propose the scheme which is outlined in Section 4 of the Commission's report. That, briefly, is that there should be set up by delegations—authoritative, plenipotentiary delegations if you like—an Advisory Committee to which there shall be compulsory reference—not a compulsory Committee. I think I can say for the whole of my fellow Commissioners here, had we been left to our own devices, had we been asked what we would do had we autocratic power in this matter, we should have said: "A Committee to which there shall be compulsory obedience; a Committee formed of delegates from the different denominations, which shall authorise the transfer of Home Mission agents, and expenses, and regulate the whole question," because we have faced the facts, we have realised the hopelessness of the present system. But we recognise that everyone has not been on the Commission, and I think the best method of securing practical Church Union would be to put everyone upon a Commission; I am perfectly certain they would emerge from it after a few months' work zealous beyond words for some closer form of union in regard to every branch of activity the Christian Church can undertake. But that is not to be yet. We must put forward some proposal which will commend itself to those who have not as yet been seized with the extreme

urgency of this case. It is only apparent when one comes to a detailed and careful study of facts. Therefore, we propose an Advisory Committee, to which there shall be compulsory reference. Suppose there is an open district, and denomination A says: "We want to go in there." If they have agreed to this scheme, they must submit their proposal to this Committee. The Committee would be in possession of the information not only in respect to that denomination, but in respect to the five (and, we hope, others will come into the contract), and the Committee then, from the mass of information at its disposal, will be able to give advice of a sound and wise and statesmanlike character, which, of course, it is not necessary that denomination A shall accept, but, we hope, the probability will be that in view of the weight of that Committee its advice will tend to be accepted as a matter of course, and ultimately, therefore, it will come into the position of a controlling interdenominational centre for Home Mission work. That is the proposal, and it will take cognisance of two classes of work, new causes, and also what is very sorely needed in Victoria, on account of the decadence of many country towns due to the dying out of the mining industry, the transfer of workers to other districts. There are many places where there has been a considerable population in days gone by, and where religious facilities did not overlap, but where the population has declined. I know of one where it has gone down 50 per cent.; two of the mines have been closed down; every other house is shut up. That is a class of case where this Committee should advise: this district is overcharged on account of decrease of population—transfer your money, your cause, your men to district B, a farming district in the Mallee, open for new population. Obviously, only a Committee which has cognisance of all the facilities offered by the denominations would be able to give such advice. This transfer to a new area of present Home Mission agencies and religious facilities would involve in the area from which a certain cause was drawn the amalgamation of existing congregations. There is a certain difficulty there. Mr. Cameron speaks of bigoted or loyal Presbyterians, which depends on the point of view. They are not confined to Presbyterianism, Methodism, Congregationalism, Baptism, or Anglicanism. We all know that this class of people exists. But be they never so loyal or bigoted, they could not have facilities for separate denominational worship in their place were it not for the Home Mission agents here in Melbourne, and if it were wisely put to them by the co-operating Committee that in the interest of the Kingdom of God this overlapping must be suppressed, and used for the extension of the Gospel in some other district, we believe they would be the first to say: "Go over and help them, and we will go under the roof-tree of another denomination." Nevertheless, these loyalties do exist, and they are not to be despised. I heartily agree with what Canon Hart has said, that we do not want to create a colorless congregationalism which is neither fish, flesh, fowl nor good red herring, and, therefore, we do not propose that where a certain amalgamation is necessary there shall be erected that strange amorphous kind of ecclesiastical institution sometimes called a Union Church. It only leads to squabbles and dissatisfaction. What we propose is that, recognising that we are one in spirit behind all diversities, recognising that we cannot all have our little isms in every little place, we shall be willing, until such time as the expansion of the districts warrants, be willing to amalgamate, to go under the ægis of another denomination in order that our denomination may go forward into some other unchurched district, and in order that that may be made as easy as possible, we draw attention to what is called the co-operative plan in the United States of America. It has been found very successful there, where conditions are analogous. Where that occurs, members retain their membership in their nearest denominational connection. There is set up in the place where amalgamation is to take place what is called a "Fellowship," as distinct from a membership. All belong to the fellowship.

Suppose the Methodist and Presbyterian co-operate in a certain district. The Methodists are advised to go somewhere else, and their members are asked to worship with the Presbyterians. Do they cease to be Methodists? No, they become members of the nearest Methodist Church. They retain their denominational connection, but they enter into a fellowship with the Presbyterian Church in that particular locality. The Presbyterians retain their membership in their nearest Church; all come together in a common fellowship in the local Church.

That is really the sum and substance of our report. It is modest, it is practical, and it has this virtue, that if the recommendation of this Commission be accepted, it is capable of indefinite expansion, even up to the point of organic union, and therefore I will read the last paragraph of the Report: "In view of all the evidence presented . . . fulfilment of the Master's prayer for the unity of His disciples."

THE PRESIDENT.—If anyone desires enlightenment on any point Mr. Richards may have passed by, I think it would be wise to have it at this stage.

REV. S. G. McLAREN.—In considering this question of overlapping, was attention given to overlapping in the city and large country towns, as well as the country districts?

REV. LEYTON RICHARDS.—Attention was given to those matters, and these four subsidiary maps represent the overlapping within the area of Melbourne itself, but, generally speaking, we think there is not serious overlapping within the City of Melbourne. Provincial towns have been taken into consideration, and in some instances I was referring to that in the 300 cases I mentioned. Melbourne and suburbs do not present serious cases, judged by the four canons laid down in the Report.

REV. S. G. McLAREN.—Suppose these 20 bigoted or loyal men will not fall in with those joint ideas, what do you propose would be done then?

REV. LEYTON RICHARDS.—You are on the horns of this dilemma. If it be advisable that there should not be a Church—say Presbyterian for the sake of argument—erected in that particular locality, which are you going to prefer, the denominational interest of the 20 Presbyterians or the Christian interest of the Kingdom of God? If the people lapse altogether, the price is perhaps worth paying, when it is either that or the failure to evangelise unevangelised districts. When loyalty is so perverted as that, I think it deserves the name of bigotry.

MR. A. H. CAMPBELL.—I am greatly taken with that co-operative idea. That seems to me to meet the objection about the bigoted Presbyterians. They will still remain Presbyterians, but there is no reason why they should not go and worship in a Wesleyan Church. When I went up to the country after being a Presbyterian all my life, and for a few hundred years before that, I found the Presbyterian Church was eight miles away. Very close handy was a Methodist Church. My father, who in Scotland had not known what a Methodist was, preached there sometimes. I joined the Sunday School, and a peculiar fact came out afterwards, that there was a Methodist Sunday School in which the superintendent and teachers were Presbyterians, and the children were Presbyterians, and yet we attended a Methodist service afterwards. Now things have gone round. That Methodist Church has a Presbyterian service. Those who have read the book brought out by Mr. Flinn will see there the suggestion of a co-operative principle to the fullest extent. He proposes that at Darwin the Presbyterians do not form a Presbyterian congregation, but that they be enrolled and be given the name of Presbyterians, and that they be asked to attend the Methodist Church, as a lot of them do now, and that the Presbyterian Home Mission give a grant of money to keep that Church going. That seems a most sensible proposition, and it is agreed to already. The only thing is whether the Commission have only considered the people who live in the townships. In the country they come in about ten miles sometimes. In our part of the country we have

not overlapping, as it happens. The Presbyterian in one place has swallowed a Methodist, in another swallowed a Baptist, in another been swallowed by a Methodist. In the one congregation we have as members a Baptist superintendent of Sunday School. He is still a Baptist, and if he left and came in where there was a Baptist Church he would go to it. We have Congregational members, we have Methodist members, and we have Church of England members—and you would not know the difference!

MR. W. H. ALLEN.—I have heard several references to the Churches of Christ. I am very sorry they are absent. I think that the Churches of Christ have a name that this Union might well adopt—we have no patent on that name. We all belong to that Church, do we not? Just a word to the members of the Council of Churches. We are not in the Council of Churches; it is not our fault. I think if the Council of Churches would send us a nice invitation to come in we would come. The mere fact that we applied for membership some time ago indicates that we did not believe you were all pagans. I have felt in this Congress we are rather "round the corner." The people of the Churches of Christ hold with you in the Deity of our Lord and Saviour, and the inspiration of the New Testament, as we understand it, and so far as I am personally concerned, I am fully in sympathy with this movement. I am sure my brethren who understand me would say the same. I am sorry that we are not on this Commission, and that reported yesterday. There is no reason why we should not be. There is every reason why we should be. As to overlapping—I got this in Perth the other day. I met a unique character, and when he found I was a parson he thought he would tell me something. He said: "I am not at all religious, but in the early days on the goldfield, when there were no Churches there, there were three things we men used to dread—women, parsons, and ghosts. When we were on the goldfield all together, there were no cliques, there were no little societies, and we were all in fellowship. By and by the Salvation Army came along, and we enjoyed them. We used to get down in the sand and listen to them play and preach, and when they passed the hat we used to get a bonzer collection, nuggets and money used to nearly fill the hat. By and by the Wesleyans sent their parson, and then the Anglicans sent theirs, and the Baptists sent theirs, and it split the whole goldfield up so that there were rival camps. We used to dread the parsons coming." I pray God the time will come when the Churches of God will be so imbued with the spirit of the Master that no community in Australia or America shall ever dread to see the herald of the cross of Christ come in, and I believe that the people with whom I stand identified in Australia and in America, when they get to understand this proposition, will be with you heart and soul, for the coming of the Kingdom of God among men.

THE PRESIDENT.—In the early days of this movement an invitation was extended to our friends, the Churches of Christ, to come in to the full discussions and upon each Commission, but the leaders, or some of the representative brothers of that Church, felt they would be freer if they were not asked to sit upon certain Commissions, but simply to be associated with the last Commission. It was no choice of the Council, but simply adherence to their own wishes, by which these friends were excluded. We are very glad to hear any member of the Church of Christ speak on any of the discussions we have before us.

MR. HUNTSMAN.—As one of the ministers of the Church of Christ in this city, I rise to endorse what Mr. Allen has said. It is a matter of regret to me personally that we are not represented on this Commission to-day. I understand clearly that it is not your fault. I have read the Report and a good deal of the evidence, and I see no hindrance why we, as a people, should not heartily participate in this work. To me the interests of extending the cause of the Kingdom of God is infinitely more than the

building up of my own people numerically, and I trust that this Council, as well as other workers and preachers in other Churches, will be patient with us until some of our people get a larger vision and a broader outlook. In the United States of America our people, whether ministers or laymen, participate freely in all these union movements. They are federating in the cities there in the work of Jesus Christ, and I simply wish to let you know that some of us at least are with you and ready to co-operate in any possible way.

MR. W. M. WOOD GREEN.—As a minister of the Church of Christ, the longest in the service of that Church of any minister in all Australia, I feel that there is a little further statement to be made. I am heartily with the statement that has been presented this morning. I am an Englishman, and identified with our English brotherhood. I am sure that they and our two brethren who have spoken are all one, but I think one point has not been sufficiently presented. Canon Hart this morning read from the 4th chapter of Ephesians, and among the seven unities in that chapter he read there was one baptism. Now, if the question of membership in the Church were settled, that is, the question of baptism, immersion, sprinkling or pouring, I know of nothing to prevent our becoming one people. But until that question is settled, I feel that we are in a difficulty, because as a people we cannot deviate from our conformity to the Word. I am not quite clear as to what my brethren Allen and Huntsman meant by their statement of being absolutely and wholly with this Congress in the Report presented this morning. I may misconceive them. I am not with it entirely, because of the difficulty, and yet I am with it absolutely in the yearning for that union of all people of God for which our Master prayed. I am sorry that the difficulty is there, but still we cannot remove it at present that I see.

REV. R. W. THOMPSON.—I am in complete sympathy with the desire to regulate our Home Mission enterprises, and I hope we are at the point of discovering the way in which something can be done in that direction. I cannot understand how anyone can go through this state and not discover that there is overlapping. I have been linked with Home Mission work practically from the beginning, and my deliberate judgment is that there is serious overlapping in many places. I feel we should try to get at the practical aspects of the case. This Home Mission enterprise is what we might call the advance guard, and the advance guard of any army is generally the first to come into collision, hence we must not be surprised if in studying the problems that are round these advance guards of the different Churches, we do come into contact with those very helpful men—we have them in the Methodist Church, as well as the Presbyterian—who are so loyal that they will be nothing else but Methodists or Presbyterians. These are men that we respect, but at the same time they do at times create our difficulties. I think we are to find other difficulties along two lines. They are indicated in the Report. One is created to an extent by the very spirit of aggression and Christliness that ought to be in all Mission work. The Home Mission of the Methodist Church was called into existence by the moving character of the population in the year 1870, when the new lands were thrown open for the first time, and the people began to move from the old centres. We were compelled to follow our people, that spirit was created in the Methodist Church of love for the new lands, and I do not think the brethren of the other Churches will grudge us this, that very often we have been the first to enter upon the new district. We have spent large amounts of money and have given men who have done hard work for Christ and His Church. There is a law of nations, the right of conquest, and in a modified sense there is a law of conquest in the Christian Church. I do not mean that in a narrow nor a bigoted sense. I stood in the forefront of the Methodist Union Movement. It has been a great blessing to the Christian Church, and if it were followed up, and if in some instances, where we withdrew or where

Churches were closed others had not been opened, there would be fewer cases of overlapping in some districts to-day. We must bear with this spirit of aggression. We must not say hard things about it. It is the right spirit, but I do think it could be regulated, and possibly in the new districts our experts might speak directly, and give us some idea whether this recommendation of the Commission is acceptable to them. There is another cause of overlapping which I do not find in the Report, and that is decadent townships. I represent at the present time what might be termed the interests of the Methodist Church, as far as its properties are concerned. I know a good deal about the difficulties of building Churches, and of paying for them after they are built. In some of the decadent townships we have Churches to-day and ministers to-day that we would be very glad to remove if we could, but we cannot. We have got financial interests. I know a town that once possessed a very large mining population—nearly 20,000 people within the near radius of that town at one time. To-day I am sure there are not more than 300 or 400. What is the consequence? The Anglican Church is there, the Presbyterian is there, the Methodist is there. There were minor Methodist Churches there, but they are closed. The Salvation Army is there. I have had an appeal made to go and help them, but what are we to do? We have £500 of Methodist money that is owing to our fund on these properties. If it were decided by this Commission that we should leave that town and give our folks to the Presbyterians, it would be a gain to them and to us if we could make an arrangement. What about the £500? Is the Presbyterian Church prepared to buy us out? I am not one to emphasise the question of finance against the spiritual, but if that were the case—and I could multiply such instances—I would say we are prepared to sell.

MR. G. G. MERCY.—As a layman who has given some thought to Home Mission work, I would like to emphasise that the question we are considering to-day is very far removed from mere finance. We have to deal with larger and more vital aspects of the question. The conclusions that the Commission have arrived at are to my mind very wise and very practical, and it should be possible to carry them into actual existence. To show the necessity for some such understanding—in one part of Melbourne there is a district rapidly developing, mainly on one side of the railway line, and it contained an Anglican Church. The Congregationalist Home Mission, secondly, established a Church. It was not many weeks before a sister denomination brought a building and placed it nearly opposite. It was not many months before another denomination was seeking for a piece of land on which also to establish a Church. It was not possible to do anything with those who had brought their Church there, but the Home Mission Committee consulted the Home Mission Committee of the third denomination, and they most graciously said they would refrain from going into that district for three years. That shows that the feeling is growing toward what this Commission is recommending. In another suburb of Melbourne, a district which had no Church, the Congregationalists bought a piece of land for the Home Mission, and had a Church removed to it, and commenced services. Within a week or two a sister denomination commenced holding services in a private residence. That denomination was asked to discontinue those services, because there was not room for the two. To show the feeling that exists, the pastor of the Church who was mainly instrumental in opening up this new district has expressed a feeling that, as the denomination that has commenced in a private house will not desist, it would perhaps be better for the Congregationalists to withdraw—another instance of the growing desire to adopt some such method of arranging matters as that foreshadowed in this Report. A third instance is somewhat personal. I give it simply as an illustration. My own family resided in a district where there are only two Churches, neither Congregational, but we attended one of them for years, and when the speaker was pressed to commence Congregational services

in his own residence, to make a start in the district, he firmly declined until the other Church should become stronger. Eventually it became much stronger, bought a piece of land and put up a brick building, and then the Congregationalists commenced. These concrete instances are mentioned to show the possibility and wisdom of accepting the Report of this Commission. I trust it will lead us to that larger and broader spirit of Christian brotherhood, to the exclusion of the unchristian competition now existing, which we all desire to see.

REV. P. J. MURDOCH.—I should like to emphasise the fact that what underlies all this proposal which is before us to-day is the growing recognition of the fact that we ought to be united. I do not think any such scheme as is before us to-day is justified unless we recognise that we ought to be united. Let me explain what I mean. You must take a concrete instance, and therefore I shall instance my own Church, the Presbyterian. Suppose I believe the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches ought not to be united, suppose I believe my Church contains and expounds such elements of Christianity as are so grievously omitted from the Methodist Church, that we Presbyterians are justified in maintaining a separate stand, why, then, I am bound to carry my Presbyterianism into every district in the country where I can get hold. Is not that the fact? If my Presbyterianism is so vitally important a distinction of Christianity that Methodism will produce a much lower grade of Christian life, then I am bound to contend against the Methodists, and I say that what we are doing to-day is recognising that these various Christian Churches ought to be united. That is the only ground on which we can properly agree to such a scheme as is laid down for us by this Commission. I am glad to recognise that union feeling is growing, but while so far as I can see I am in favour of these proposals, I wanted to hear what was to be said on the other side. I am not going to speak on the other side, but there are difficulties. I am very glad that the Commission has not proposed that this joint Committee should have compelling power, because I am sure the Presbyterians would not have accepted that proposal. Some such proposal was rejected by the Presbyterian Church in 1906. I regret that it should have been rejected, but it was. But an Advisory Committee is a most excellent thing. There would, however, be this difficulty—an Advisory Committee must win its way to power. It may, as Mr. Richards hopes, and I hope, succeed in securing so great an influence that its opinion will be compelling, but if it is to do that, it must do so by approved wisdom, a wisdom that will be recognised by all the parties concerned, so that by degrees they will come to think that what the Advisory Committee recommends must certainly be good. That means a very careful walk and conversation for the Advisory Committee, and it means, amongst other things, that it must be made up of men who know Home Missions, who know the various conditions of the Churches, and who will attend the Committee meetings with absolute faithfulness. There is another big difficulty. I know that, speaking of my own Church, the Presbyterian Church sometimes seems to intentionally overlap. It is not the case. I believe we are, upon the whole, thoroughly desirous to avoid overlapping, but we are face to face with this. We have about 17 or 18 per cent. of the population, and we know quite well that in all normal districts we will have about a sixth or a seventh of the population in due course. Now, we may have quite few at the present moment, and these few may come and say: "We want a Presbyterian Church here, but there is another Church, and it is not very strong yet." And the other Church may say to us: "We want to get your people in the meantime to support our Church, and we wish you would stay away." It is perfectly natural, but we are placed in this position, that in a few years we will have a population there to justify our having a Church there, and if we do not begin now we will be handicapped, and our people will complain to us afterwards that we have left them, and they have connected themselves with another

Church, and so on. We are getting into a great deal of difficulty by not doing that which is called overlapping. This Committee would have to take all that into consideration. The only way to get out of the difficulty finally is to have an organic union of these Churches.

REV. S. G. McLAREN.—I am heart and soul with this movement that is being discussed. It has been my practice all my lifetime to worship along with other brothers when I could not worship in my own Church. In the foreign field I have even worshipped in what has been called the monstrosity of a Union Church, and found myself very much at home. On board ship I have got quite to like the services. When travelling, I have attended prayer meetings held by Anglican brothers; they read the service, and I enjoyed it very much. If I go into a Methodist Church, unless I knew beforehand I really do not think I should be aware whether I was in a Presbyterian Church or not. So I think this joint method of worshipping should be encouraged. I differ a little from Mr. Murdoch when he says that this joint worshipping should be based in all cases on a conviction that organic unity is possible. Even although a man is not prepared to go as far as organic unity he may be prepared to go as far as co-operation. That ought to be encouraged, and then when circumstances are favourable to people joining their own denomination, by all means let them do it. The Rev. Mr. Spurgeon once came to Scotland when a movement was being discussed for union between the various denominations there. The one held belief in a State Church, the other held that no Church should be a State Church. Mr. Spurgeon gave them very good advice. He said that when the Children of Israel were travelling in the wilderness, some believed that when another Joseph arose in Egypt they should go back to Egypt, and the others held that in no circumstances should they go back to Egypt. He thought that in the meantime they ought all to travel together through the wilderness, and if another Joseph arose, then they could go back. I think something must be allowed for the strong denominational attachment that prevails in some people, and that you must not carry this union to the length of forcing people to join it. The length to which some people will go in the way of loyalty is extraordinary. They are very good people, these; they have a great deal of the spirit of Christ; but I am quite willing to believe that denominational preferences are safe, and will receive all the consideration they desire.

REV. DR. WATKIN.—I am the oldest minister in the Commonwealth, Australian born, who is capable of active service, and I rejoice to be here to-day in connection with this conference. I have always advocated union. No matter how far you extend parallel lines they will never meet, but twenty-five years ago I said that Presbyterianism and Methodism were converging lines, and that though I would not live to see it, the time would come when Presbyterians and Methodists would be bound in one religious organisation. I have a wider outlook to-day. In our time history is being made very quickly, and I believe the time is coming quickly in Australia when there will be one Church, including all who love the Lord Jesus Christ, yet allowing for divergence of opinion and practice. But to get on to the question of Home Missions. My friend, Mr. Bryant, has judiciously selected green as the colour for the people called Methodists, for, judging by the absence of worldly prudence, we are a green people to do so much pioneering work in connection with the extension of the Kingdom of God in this State. We do it everywhere, and when the rough-and-tumble work is over, then comes along our Presbyterian friend, and says: "Isn't your name McIntosh? Didn't you and your forbears belong to the Presbyterian Church? You ought to come with us!" And, like a loyal Presbyterian, he goes. Then the Anglican comes along, and he says: "Weren't you baptised in our Church, and oughtn't you to come back to our Church?" And he goes. Judged by the maxims of worldly prudence, a Church that proceeds on the lines on which the Methodist Church has proceeded is green in the extreme, but judged by the higher

law of Christian morality, we are doing the work, I think, which Christ would have us do, and trying to carry out the maxim of John Wesley—we are “the friend of all and the enemy of none.” Our divisions have been justified in the past; are they justifiable in the present, will they be justifiable in the future? I rejoice in this practical scheme that is proposed for our acceptance to-day. It can be worked, provided that denominationalism does not become rampant. If it is accepted, there must be no attempt to build up one Church at the expense of another—the attempt to proselytise must be a thing of the past. So long as Church membership is recognised, it seems to me that this is a perfectly practical scheme, and it will help considerably to bring about the good time that is certainly coming, for our Divine Lord and Master cannot pray in vain that we shall all be one, not one in uniformity, but one in the unity of spirit and in the bond of peace.

At this stage the Congress adjourned until 3 p.m.

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON, 3RD SEPTEMBER, 1913.

THE PRESIDENT called upon Rev. F. J. Wilkin and Mr. William Webber to open the meeting with prayer.

REV. R. J. E. HAYMAN.—Might I first of all say that I hope with the short time left we shall all as closely as possible keep our minds to the exact subject before us. I understand we are met to-day to deal with this sectional subject, the question of Home Mission movement. I am entirely agreed with the remarks made by the convener in his speech to-day. I am in complete sympathy with the report as presented to the Congress. We have placed before you what we look upon as a working policy. We are not called upon to deal with the larger question of organic union, but how best to deal with the Home Mission subject. I have worked for a number of years in West Victoria, and to my mind there is nothing more hurtful to our Church life in Victoria than the great waste of strength going on in the country districts in this State. For the past twelve years I have moved up and down the face of the Mallee, and again and again it has come home to me that it is simply a shocking case that we, who all believe in the great question of Christianity, should be so divided in working amongst these people in that part of Victoria, and I think it is a thing we shall all agree upon in regard to the question of overlapping.

My second point is this—the growing indifference of the masses to organised religion. It is quite true that the spirit of Christianity is spreading more and more amongst the people, but I think the great masses of people care very little indeed for organised religion, and you cannot live in this City without seeing on Sundays the thousands of people going away to all parts, and very few comparatively going to the public places of worship. Therefore, it is all important, I think, if we are to keep Australia a Christian Australia that we should make our Home Mission work thoroughly effective, and I am quite sure you will all agree with me that it is amazing how much money is being wasted in this Home Mission work. There are many districts where grants of £50 to £100 are given just to keep Churches up for thirty or forty inhabitants. It seems to me that the individual Churches must realise the great needs of the scattered districts, and must be prepared to give way for at least a while. I think we are all prepared to make some sacrifices for the sake of the whole cause of the Church of Christ in Australia. It has been said that the greatest problem of the Empire to-day is how to keep the Empire Christian, and while we all believe in a white Australia, there is something more important, and that is a Christian Australia, and this is emphasised when you see on the Lord's day thousands and tens of thousands of people who do not care one half-penny for religion. First of all, we must try to bring about this working policy in connection with the Home Missions

of the various Churches. I am here to-day on behalf of the Church of England, as an individual member, to say how we sympathise with the movement, and trust you will try to bring about some working policy which may be for the good of the whole cause.

MR. LIONEL LEWIS.—I can say to-day that the hearts and minds of many of our brethren in the scattered and remote parts of the State are with us to-day; they look upon this subject as the most vital subject with which we have to deal, and one which affects their lives most. It is a sad thing in many country places, as has already been pointed out, to see the unseemly rivalry which exists between Churches that are there, each struggling to try and get a footing, none of them sound, none robust, none exercising a salutary influence in the community; now it is necessary that we should adopt honest methods to put a stop to this evil. Now what advantages could be gained? One would be that, instead of having many young men, who have gone out with great hopes, having the hearts and souls taken out of them by the adverse conditions under which they have to labour, and by having to spread their energies over a vast extent of territory where they scarcely have time to make any influence felt, if we could devise some means of limiting the territories, they would come into more personal touch and relationship with those to whom they minister, and thus a great gain would be effected. Then, again, we would attract better men to the Ministry; there would be a greater opportunity given to them; they would see that they could exercise their gifts to a greater extent and with far more effect. Another thing, lay agencies would be developed; they would be under proper guidance. The Minister would guide a better organisation; his workers would be organised for the different work to which they were best adapted. That is something to be gained; that is something to work for, and which is utterly impossible while the present state of affairs exist.

Another thing is, and it is a sad feature in Church life, the differences which take place. I have gone into some country districts, and there have been squabbles about this matter, and squabbles about some other matter. Now, I venture to say that if, instead of that unhealthy life they are now living—if you can dignify it by the name of life—we could have them engaged in some definite work that would inspire them, and make them feel they were important members of the Church taking part in a glorious work, they would be so occupied that there would be no time for squabbles. The proposals of the Commission are probably the most practical that can be got at the present time. There might have been a more ideal proposal presented to us, but as has been pointed out, we must consider what it is possible to effect at the present time. I had a great idea that we might see our way clear to establish the Union of Churches, but the Convener of the Commission does not give much encouragement to that idea, but probably we may find that when we come to get to details, we are all of one accord, and that is perhaps an illustration of the differences that have arisen between the Churches throughout the ages.

What is to be the membership of these Churches which will to some extent become Union Churches, because it is proposed that those who do not belong to any particular denomination, would have fellowship of that Church, instead of being ordinary members, and so to a certain extent you would make that a Union Church. Now, how would the management of that Church be arranged? Who would have part in the management? What provision would be made for the ordinances of confirmation and adult baptism—and, by the way, I might mention to those of our friends who lay great stress on the practice of adult baptism, that in the Church of England we have a special service provided for those who are of riper years and able to answer for themselves. So you see we have provided what they need, the ordinance of the sacrament of baptism administered to adults, and by immersion.

Now I regret that there has been no provision made for moving amendments, because that might have brought the debate into closer touch with practical issues involved, but we must bear this in mind, that the object of this Congress is to bring us together for its moral and social effect, and to engender the necessary enthusiasm, and then to organise a Council which I trust will carry on the work which has been begun here. It will be for this Council to go thoroughly into the question, and into the verifying of the practical issues involved in the matter, and to put it into workable form. And no doubt when this is carried into effect many of us will see that what is proposed to be put into operation is something with which we can cordially agree. The sooner we have this terrible evil of overlapping remedied the better it will be for the influence of the Church, and it will enable the Church to fulfil her mission as she should be doing.

REV. F. I. WILKIN.—It is quite true that this matter is of great interest to me; for some thirty years I have been in closest touch with the Home Mission work in the Baptist denomination, for the most part doing Home Mission work myself, and for a great number of years supervising the work in the State of Victoria, but yet I cannot claim to be expert, for I feel that the problems are great, and many of them to my mind insoluble, but I just want to say that I want to express my approval generally of the report of the Commission. As to the fact of overlapping, I do not think there are two sides to the question, and I do not think the worst has been said of it. I could give many instances of overlapping worse than those given in the appendix of the report. The facts are all too patent that there has been serious overlapping in a great many parts of the State. Emphasis has been laid upon the fact that there has been a great waste of money, time and energy; but that is not the worst side, which is that there has been a great deal of rivalry and bitter antagonism in connection with the work, and although we have been working in the name of Jesus Christ, we have produced unchristian results. We have divided families, divided households, and in that way I believe, although we started out with the best intentions, we have produced ill results. I do not think that overlapping has been wholly an evil, for where there is more than one denomination in a district Christian activities have been stimulated; but where there is only one the work might become somewhat stagnant. Where there is more than one denomination they incite one another and more work is done. But apart from all that, we all admit the evils, and I, for one, would hail any remedy. I do not know quite how these evils can be overcome. I have been thinking about this matter for years, for it is no new matter and no new problem, and I agree with the suggestions of an advisory board being appointed, but I wish that something stronger could be done. It is quite possible with only an advisory board that the advice might be set on one side all too readily, and yet I do not see how there can be a compelling Board. We might enter into a compact with our eyes open and bind ourselves to accept the findings of that Advisory Board; I do not know whether we are prepared for that, but unless we are the Advisory Board would be largely inoperative. The difficulty seems to be that the Board would only be a Board of Advice. That Board may take evidence and give sound judgment, but we may find that there are reasons that will lead them to set on one side the advice given by that Federal Board. The Commission proposes that there should be two kinds of Churches, a Federal Church and a Co-operative Church. Supposing there were only one Church and the members of different denominations unite in fellowship, but retain their membership with the Church at a distance, would not the result be that it would only last for one generation. Whilst those who are in fellowship might retain their loyalty to their old denomination their children would inevitably be members of the local Church, and we could only expect that by and by all the attendants would become members of that Church. I suppose that is a matter of

detail, however, and must be left. The suggestion is that a Council should draw up a Constitution, but who is going to appoint this Council? It seems to me that a practical result of these deliberations would be that this Congress recommend the different Church Assemblies to nominate representatives to form a Council, which will then draft a Constitution to be sent on to the different Church Assemblies for their consideration. Perhaps that will come later, but I will just say that with all heartiness I hail the suggestions, that there should be some attempt made to bring us into union in working for the Lord Jesus Christ. My impression is that we are more careful over our own denominations than the good of mankind. I do hope that one and all will work for Him Whose name we love.

REV. A. T. HOLDEN.—I wish to say, in the first place, that personally I very heartily agree in the findings of this Commission. I do not think there can be any difference of opinion as to the subject of overlapping; it certainly exists. I do not think it is as prevalent as some people say, but it does exist; and so long as our present methods of Church extension continue, overlapping must not only continue, but become more and more acute. At the present time the various Churches look out into the newly-settled districts, and say there is a district where the people are taking up land; the ordinances of religion have not yet been established. Then the Home Mission Committee looks up the district, and says, because we must supply the spiritual needs of the people, because there are people of our own denomination in that district, because possibly no one else is supplying the means of grace, we must send a Missionary, and so a Home Mission is established in certain districts. That Home Missionary is maintained largely by the Church which sends him out. The people for the first few years are few in number; they are not able to maintain a man who is sent to supply them with the ordinances of religion. This man, by visiting amongst the people and maintaining public service, is able to keep kindled in the hearts of the people the spiritual instinct. Things go along nicely, and then, just as the congregation is gathered together and things are organised, another denomination sends their Missionary along, and immediately the constituency is divided up into at least two different camps. Before long another Church will send its agent, and possibly a little later still another. And then you get from that stage to later on, when the district is decadent, and you come on a period of years when the evils of overlapping are calamitous. I think that is the history of very many parts of Victoria. After all, the overlapping stage is only a phase in the development of things. Perhaps there is scarcely a town in Victoria which at one time or another has not been the scene of overlapping. In some cases after the years have elapsed the population has increased, and the people have become more prosperous; then there is room for the various Churches that were established in the earlier years amidst so many difficulties, so that overlapping where population increases and the country develops is only a temporary condition of things, and what we seek in this Commission is that in that temporary period we should have some better system than at present prevails, and until we can have co-operation between the Churches and mutual consideration for each other, I do not think we can in any way minimise the present evils of overlapping, and personally I do welcome the proposals put before us by this Committee. Of course there will be difficulties, and as we commence to work these proposals out we shall find these difficulties out. There is no overlapping down here in the city; we ought to have more workers than we have in this great city, and there is practically no overlapping in the larger provincial towns; but when you come to settle which Church shall go out and which remain in the various country districts, then you will find that local feeling is so strong on both sides that it will be very difficult. I believe that we could settle the difficulty very easily if it had to be done by a gathering of city representatives, but it is in the country districts them-

selves that you will find the main difficulties. I think there are some of the Churches more closely affected in this matter than others; speaking for the Methodist Church, we have in our Home Mission area alone—and the Home Mission area is outside altogether of the districts which are ministered to by our ordinary Ministry—314 congregations; now it can easily be seen that this Home Mission sphere is larger than seven of the other denominations put together, and, consequently, when the price has to be paid, those who are in the places that will be worked upon, will have to face the cost. Yet I think that the Methodist Church, although I can only speak for myself, is quite prepared to stand in with the other Churches and do what is fair and just all round in the interests of Christ's Kingdom, and in order to abolish what now is certainly a discreditable state of things in many parts of this State. I do not know that it will always mean the withdrawing of men from a district, but it may certainly involve the different placing of these men in that district. A few days ago I was in a distant part of Victoria where there was a population of not more than 350 people, half of whom were Roman Catholics; for the other half there were three Protestant Churches holding service both morning and evening; the total congregation would be under 100 people, and yet there were three of us preaching in that little town. But that is not the whole question—that does not state fully the position. In this particular district I suppose there are 25 preaching places covered by those three ministers, who make the little town their headquarters, and the only place where they overlap is in the little town itself. They must make the township the centre; but if we could have some general understanding arrived at as between the various denominations, how much better the work could be done if one, at least, of those men went out forty miles, where one has to go every week, and if we could have a redistribution of our men throughout Victoria, it would enable them to do a finer service for Christ than we can possibly do to-day.

Six years ago we had as a Home Mission Committee some very happy conferences with the Home Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Church. It was at a time when the sister Church was renewing its activities along Home Mission lines, and we felt that if all the cases of overlapping as between the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches could be settled, it would not be very hard to settle the rest. After meeting several times we came quite unanimously to a series of recommendations, practically the same as those now before us in the report of this Commission, going a little bit further perhaps, and with a little more detail. One would think a series of resolutions unanimously agreed to by the Home Mission Executive resident in this city, on the part of these two Churches, would be easily carried out, but the trouble is, in this question of overlapping, that in the very districts where the evils exist you will find it the hardest matter to provide a remedy, because you have got such strong sentiment to face. In the city it does not matter, for people can always attend their own Church; but it makes a difference to some families in the country districts who are linked with some particular Church through old Associations. The fate of the resolutions was simply this; they were discussed by our Presbyterian friends in the Assembly, comprising country Presbyterians as well as city, and were thrown out. The Methodist Synod did not meet until after the Presbyterian Assembly, and consequently the resolutions which would probably have carried in the Methodist Conference, brought a different result.

It is to be sincerely hoped, as the result of this Congress, that we shall send to the separate Churches concerned some strong recommendations. I do not think the Council suggested can be anything more than a Council of Advice. You cannot expect the Churches to give over such an important matter as their own extension to an outside Committee, even though they may have representation upon it, but I think we can expect that the Churches who will form this Council will be in honour bound

to respect the recommendations of that Council, and I believe that if the Churches concerned will but stand in with the proposals of this Commission, we shall have the dawning of a better day. It has seemed to me very clearly that God's hand is in this movement; one seems somehow to feel that in praying for guidance and blessing upon this Congress, the Divine presence comes very near, and if God be in this, we will not prevent it.

REV. W. THOMPSON.—I do not claim to speak authoritatively for the Presbyterian Church, but as I happen to have been a pioneer Minister in the Goulburn Valley, I can speak from my own experience there. I was also in the Western District of Victoria for 26½ years, and I have the privilege of looking after the various missions of the Presbyterian Church. I am delighted to hear the views of the Rev. Mr. Holden, as they quite agree with my own experience and view, and that is, that no serious disadvantage has come to any Church in the progressive districts in this country in connection with overlapping. The difficulty in the Goulburn Valley was not the getting of districts, but the getting of men to work them. I was there for eight years, and during that period for half the time I played a lone hand in the whole district of the Goulburn Valley, north of Murchison, so far as the Presbyterian Church is concerned, and the same statement applies to both the Methodist and Anglican Churches. There were no evils from overlapping as far as I know of, and no evils have existed since. The proposal of the Committee for an Advisory Board is not a new one; it existed, and existed in a more definite form when I went to the Goulburn Valley; it existed in the constitution of what was then known as the Pastoral Aid Society, a Society consisting of Church of England and Presbyterian laymen which was formed in Melbourne, and the purpose of that Society was to prevent overlapping, and it succeeded to a very great extent. I worked under it, and not only worked under it with the Church of England, but gained financially by means of it—for this Society not only laid down rules as to services, but it gave financial compensation to the Ministers that worked under it. The result, so far as I was concerned, was this, that I had three morning services at my headquarters, and one evening service, and the Church of England Clergyman had three evening and one morning service. I think if this were adopted widely and wisely for the whole State we would soon not hear of any evils from overlapping. The difficulty, as Major Holden has pointed out, is not that there are too many men, but that these men are sometimes occupied in too small an area; and if some means were devised whereby these men could be directed or advised, at any rate so that the services would not be held at the same time in a small township, I think we would very soon find that the evils referred to would soon pass away.

Reference has been made to a statement by the Rev. D. A. Cameron, and I am sure if it were not for a prior engagement Mr. Cameron would have been here to defend the statement made to the Commission; but I would like to say that from my own experience, in the main his statements are correct. I think that it will be found that in general the serious overlapping with the disastrous results referred to only exists in decadent districts, and not in progressive districts. In those mining townships, with a depleting population, there is not room for so many workers, or for so many Churches; and if the Council that is proposed can do anything to minimise the evils in those places, then I think good work will be done.

REV. G. J. MACKAY.—I would just like to say that I am very glad to have the opportunity of saying that I heartily agree with the suggestions and recommendations of the Commission now before us, and I believe that the co-operative system proposed is quite possible; that is, possible almost at once, provided, in the first place, all the denominations come into line. It seems to me that our difficulties would be almost as great as ever if three or four, or even five, agreed, and the others stood out.

If we are to have any satisfactory solution of this difficult problem we must have united action, we must co-operate in the fullest sense of the word; also, not only must all the denominations be prepared to join together in this, but they must all be prepared to give and take, and in that case I am sure there are certain experiences we should be saved which, as individual denominations, we have to endure in the present state of affairs. In some towns a denomination is compelled to retire; it seems that their work is unsuccessful, they have given it a fair trial, and they determine to withdraw. Now, no denomination likes to withdraw after labouring for a few years, as there is a certain feeling of humiliation about being compelled to give in; but if they withdrew on the advice of an Advisory Board, as proposed, there would be no such feeling. All the denominations would feel that what has happened to one in this town might happen to another elsewhere, and with this mutual feeling and determination to give and take, I think we would be saved a good deal of unpleasant feeling. No one particular denomination is to blame for going in when other denominations are there; we are all guilty of that kind of thing. Personally, I feel that that sort of thing is my business at the present time, as I have been specially appointed by my denomination to look after Home Mission enterprise, and if I think there is any chance at all I am there. At the same time, the Rev. Mr. Murdoch touched the crux of the matter this morning, when he said that all these proposals should result in organic union. If each separate denomination feels justified in its separate existence, it is therefore justified in propagating its own distinctive principles at every point. We exist, speaking for my own denomination, very largely because there are certain principles and practices which we hold to be essential, and which the other Churches are not emphasising; and therefore, because we believe that, we believe in existing in any town or district where it seems possible for us to exist, and as Mr. Murdoch puts it, we feel justified in going in wherever there is an open door, but it certainly seems that organic union will be possible some day. My personal view is this—if there is a town with a very limited population, I am not prepared to advocate the establishment of a Baptist cause, and if there are two or three other denominations there, they should be allowed to remain there undisturbed, for whilst I believe we are justified in propagating the principles we believe to be Scriptural, we must for the time being waive our right where there is a limited population; given a reasonable population, however, we believe our particular principles should be propagated, and feel there is an opening there. However, I wish to say that I heartily agree with the proposals of the Commission for an Advisory Board, or Council, and I hope that the advice of such a Board will be accepted and adopted, and that there will be fair play all round; that each denomination will be given its turn. If denomination "A" be advised to settle in a place, then denomination "B" will be considered the next time, and "C" the next time, and so on. If we assume that organic union is possible, and likely, then this is certainly on the right lines, and it will help immensely in the Kingdom of God.

Dr. E. J. STUCKEY (Peking, China).—I have listened to the debate to-day with a great deal of interest. Coming straight from the Mission-field, one feels perhaps a little out of touch with some of the difficulties that are evidently present in the minds of those who are discussing this problem as it affects the Home Mission-field in Victoria. We have also had this difficulty of overlapping in the Mission-field. You here, at home, may say that overlapping is inadvisable, and a waste of energy; we on the Mission-field use stronger terms, and say it is sinful, and the whole aim and tendency of the Christian policy is to avoid in every place the difficulty of overlapping competition. There is absolutely no excuse for it in Christian service on the Mission-field. In China at the present time the difficulty of the allotting of various spheres of work has been overcome by the appointment of Federation Councils in each province. I think now in

China in all but two provinces there are Federation Councils, which meet together. They are only Advisory Councils. They meet to discuss the question of allotting the various parts of the field to various Missionary Societies. Although these are only Advisory Councils, the weight of opinion behind them is so great that I do not know of any instance in which their recommendations have been disregarded.

Another difficulty which has been spoken of to-day in the matter of a rearrangement of the spheres of work of the various denominations in Victoria was the matter of property. We also had that difficulty. In some cases property has been erected, and a considerable amount of money has been put into that centre; later on, from various reasons, the work has gone down, and then the question comes: Shall we leave the property which has been put up, and give up that district, or shall we, because of the property, retain that district? And we have come to the conclusion that the first loss is the smallest, and if it is a question of property, or having effective work done, then the property goes. When we have made any rearrangement of territory, and Churches have had to be transferred from one Mission to another, there have at times been difficulties, and there will always be difficulties, but I call to mind the advice given to us in our Student Christian Movement by Dr. Mott. We had met together with him and spoke of the difficulty in the way of the work, and after he had listened to every difficulty we could name, he said: "Well, I would not take away one of these difficulties, because the greater they are the more we are forced back upon God for the solution of these difficulties." That has remained with me all my life as an inspiration when one is faced with difficulties such as those you are faced with to-day.

THE PRESIDENT.—It is probably within the knowledge of many of the members of this Congress that some degree of counsel has taken place between the various Church Courts, or, at any rate, between the representatives of Churches with respect to the allocation of districts in dealing with the Northern Territory and Western Australia, and a practical agreement come to between the Churches to have their own area, and to restrict themselves to their own areas of service, principally, of course, with respect to the Aborigines, and as far as I know the various Churches have been disposed to accept those districts allocated to them. There is just one instance in our own State that has been of particular interest, and Major Holden, who was associated with the Committee, or the different members who dealt with it, I think might help you to understand how the various Home Mission Committees, through their representatives, are at present prepared to act together in a degree that we have never had anything like before.

REV. A. T. HOLDEN.—It must not be thought because there is competition between some of the Churches, that there is any feeling other than the kindest friendship between the various Home Mission Superintendents or Directors; as a matter of fact, they are a very happy family. We have had under consideration the question that affects equally all the Churches, and that is the making of some provision for the spiritual and social needs of man in the railway construction camps. On the railway works between Bairnsdale and Orbost there will be between 800 to 1000 men working. Bishop Pain, of Gippsland, has been doing a good deal for the last twelve or fourteen months, but the work has been rather hampered because there has been no equipment, and we have been meeting together and discussing the question of purchasing a tent, that can be commodious, well lighted, furnished with seats and tables, writing and reading materials, and games, so that, placed in the midst of these men, it will be a place of comfort for them when the day's work is finished, when so many of them find their way to the public-houses. We have met together, in several meetings—Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, Methodists—and the Bishop of Gippsland has been with us in correspond-

ence, and we are all quite agreed that a man, equipped as well as he can possibly be, shall be placed on that line, and the cost of that work shall be divided between all these Protestant Churches.

We quite expect that that work will extend to other railway construction camps, to men working in irrigation channels, and wherever such labour is being carried out, and good Christian work can be done amongst such men, and I think we are all prepared as Christian Churches not to wait until union comes into operation, but to act at once.

REV. PROF. ADAM.—As one who has not been a member of this Commission, I should like to express my own indebtedness, and I am sure the indebtedness of a large number of the members of this Congress, to Mr. Leyton Richards and his Commission for the very thorough way they have done their work. They have had a large number of meetings and amassed a great deal of very useful information, which is published here in this report, and, in addition to all the work of hearing witnesses and examining them, and tabulating the information, they have prepared these elaborate maps, which have been drawn up to illustrate the overlapping which at present exists, in the opinion of the Commission, in regard to the work of the various Churches. The various Churches are shown by different coloured beads, and, in addition to that, a series of cards has been prepared, giving detailed information as to the exact statistics in all the different districts, and all that means a vast amount of work, and I think we are much indebted to Mr. Richards and his Commission for this work. The one statement that Mr. Richards sought to substantiate in the morning had been that there was serious overlapping at various places, and a needless expenditure of means and energy, and that something should be done, if possible, to counteract that overlapping. From what I have read in this report, and all the evidence which has been given, I think they have made out their case, and I hope something will be done to counteract the unnecessary expenditure of means and energy, and if this Congress can devise some means for this end, they will do a good service to the Church and Kingdom of Christ. I am sorry that our own Director of Mission work, who is an expert, and one whose opinion is regarded as very good, and who is looked up to, Mr. Cameron, is not able to be with us this afternoon to have taken part in this discussion, in which he is most deeply interested. I notice that he was the only one of the witnesses examined who was of the opinion that there was scarcely any overlapping worth speaking of, and we would have liked Mr. Cameron's views on this point. I think, however, as far as we can judge from the evidence, that there is overlapping in the sense that Mr. Richards and his Commission understand it, and the cure they propose for this evil commends itself to my judgment as a very reasonable one. The burden of their proposal is, that with the approval of the Churches, an Advisory Committee should be constituted, to be consulted before any new Missions were planted, or Church extension done. Mr. Richards stated that if his Commission had had their way they would have made this Advisory Committee compulsory, but I am very glad they did not make it compulsory, and that the suggestion is only that this Committee should be an Advisory Committee, and I agree that it will need to act wisely, and to justify itself if it is to carry the influence and weight which we hope it may carry in Church extension and Home Mission work. I certainly think that all we shall recommend will be an Advisory Committee, and not one having authoritative powers over the Churches.

It seems to me that a matter of considerable importance will be the constitution of this Advisory Board, and what steps must be taken by this Congress to gather up the results of the Commission, and what is the procedure as to how this Advisory Committee is to be set going. In this report it is recommended that the Congress shall empower a Council to draw up its resolutions, and so on. I suppose Mr. Richards will be content with what I was content with yesterday, a general ap-

proval, and that a Committee will be formed at the end of this Congress to deal with all the reports. I should like to draw your attention to one thing, and that is with regard to the Constitution of this Committee. I think your Committee ought to go with a definite proposal indicating what they think the composition of such an Advisory Committee should be. I would draw your attention to a paragraph on page 13 of this report, beginning with "Without wishing to bias this Council, etc. . . ." I think we should give effect to that, and make that an instruction to the Committee when appointing this Advisory Board. It seems to me that if we are to anticipate opposition from any quarter, the probability is that it will come from my own Church, the Presbyterian Church. The reason why I think so is that I find on page 36 of this report, it is stated that a somewhat similar proposal was submitted to the Presbyterian Church in 1906 by a joint Committee of the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches, and I find that that proposal was turned down by the Presbyterian Assembly. I was not in the country at the time, and do not know what weighed with my brethren in the action they took. I was hoping that some of the Presbyterians here who were present at that time, and knew why the proposal had been rejected, would take part in this discussion. The Committee proposed at that time was to be a compulsory one, and I think it is very probable that was the reason it was turned down, that they were not prepared to give away their powers altogether to a Committee. I think if we come before the Assemblies with another proposal, a proposal which does not finally take away their power, but which advocates an Advisory Committee, and if this proposal comes from all the different denominations, there is every reason to suppose that our Presbyterian Assembly will welcome the proposal this time and will not turn it down, as they did the last time.

REV. W. S. ROLLAND.—I think I was Moderator at the time this proposition was made, but I am not prepared to say from recollection how it was that the Presbyterian Church turned it down. I may say it was without my consent, but that is a mere personal matter, and even the Moderator has not the power that some men suppose.

I should like to say that it has been a very great delight to be here, and I must say that the coming together of so many ministers of our Churches in friendly discussion and contact is a very great gain to most of us. I know I have had my prejudices, and it is really wonderful how these prejudices disappear if you hear a man speak. I think the thing we ought all to aim at is to hear a man speak himself, and not listen to what others say about him. I think if we cultivated that spirit more than we do, we should be nearer to the Union of Churches. I have been lately travelling in Australia and my feeling about the Home Mission question is that it is a wider one than what affects Victoria or any one State. I have been to the Northern Territory and as far north-west as Leonora, and in all those places I have been discussing matters like this with the ministers amongst whom I have been in contact, and there is a feeling that there ought to be a union, and that there would be an immense saving of strength and energy if only we could have a united Church somehow.

The difficulty I see about this question of making it entirely voluntary is that it is just possible somebody might refuse to submit to this Advisory Committee; then what is going to happen? Will it be the old story again: Are we just to go back to where we were before, and is the overlapping to continue? And that is the strongest argument for a really united Church, that it would have authority to carry out things, but with an Advisory Committee you can only suggest and advise, and cannot compel. And indeed I see you have the word compulsory here suggested. How are you going to compel people—by force of arms? I have just been lecturing to my people, and I required a great amount of courage on the eve of the Congress for the Unity of Churches, because last Sunday I

lectured on the subject of the Covenanters, and especially on the awful afflictions exercised by the Black Prelacy on Presbyterians, but I explained to my people that perhaps it was somewhat ungracious to recall these sad events of hundreds of years ago, but there is one thing to be remembered, and it is this, that Scotch people gave up their own confession of faith in order to take the Westminster confession of faith which was made in London, for the purpose of uniting England, Scotland, and Ireland in one creed and in one Church. It is just possible that somebody may criticise, but I have been reading it up lately. No doubt I wanted my people to understand that long ago there was a desire for a united Church of Great Britain and Ireland. Now, should there not be a desire here for a united Church in Australia, and my own opinion is that while you may have these palliatives in the meantime, you may eventually have to go further.

REV. E. DAVIES (Congregationalist).—I do not propose to take up many minutes, but would like to express my approval of the final statement made by Mr. Rolland. I am an enthusiastic believer in organic union in the Churches for many reasons. I rise principally to suggest one or two practical difficulties which I can foresee in this suggestion of the Commission. The first concerns the membership of the co-operative Churches; if they are Federal, of course, they will join the one Church, apparently not having membership in any Church, but becoming members of a joint Church—in which case the question of the government of the Church, its officers, and so on, becomes a very vital question. That problem has been faced wherever union Churches have been suggested. If they be co-operative Churches, then they have a co-operative membership, and though they be still a member of the Congregational, Presbyterian, Methodist or Baptist, as the case may be, yet taking part in the fellowship of that particular Church, in which case we have again to ask—where will rest the government of the Church, its officers, and so on?

REV. LEYTON RICHARDS.—Our proposal is not for a Union Church, but that members shall meet under the roof of existing denominations—the government then needs no alteration.

REV. E. DAVIES.—For that I am thankful, because I think it will mean that the friends who join in fellowship with any particular Church will cease to have connection with their own particular denominations. We, as Congregationalists, have only to record with a sigh the immense numbers of people we have lost who have joined in fellowship with other Churches, and been lost to us for ever in consequence. I am just indicating that any particular Church that has a district allotted to it on those terms will, I believe, capture 90 or 95 per cent. of the Church-going people in that district for all time, and that has to be faced by the friends who have to do with this Advisory Committee. Another thing, it will not be possible, as suggested by the Baptist Home Mission agent, that we shall take it in turn, it must be proportionate to the present strength of the various denominations; in which case we, as Congregationalists, and the Baptists likewise, would only have a very occasional turn. However, we believe in the larger interests of the Kingdom of God, and because of that we welcome heartily any such cause. I believe that the Christian Church must finally become Catholic, and I do not think that any of the Churches represented here this afternoon can call themselves Catholic, for experience has demonstrated to us that we never can meet the needs of all the people in any particular town. We want a Church that will meet the needs of all sorts and conditions of men, and possibly to that splendid ideal the Spirit of the living God is leading us at the present time.

REV. P. J. MURDOCH.—I just wish to say that I was present at the Presbyterian Assembly which turned down the proposal of a union between the Methodists and themselves, but have no very clear recollection, except of my own dismay, and the strong impression remains in my mind, which I think Major Holden expressed, that the proposal was turned down

by the country members of the Assembly, but I should say it was a very different proposal from that which was laid before you to-day.

REV. LEYTON RICHARDS.—I think this has been an exceedingly interesting day, very interesting to me because I was familiar with the subject before we began. It has given rise to a considerable amount of discussion, but I think the criticisms have been confronting details rather than principles, because in the main we are all agreed. I was very glad to hear certain expressions of regret from gentlemen connected with the Churches of Christ, and I would like to say now that there is nothing whatever to prevent the Churches of Christ coming into this at any time they please; we shall be only too glad, since they are one of the extending and expanding denominations of the State. If I may I will deal with one minor objection before I come to what I consider the real objection, and that was a suggestion dropped by Mr. Wilkins, that it was our divisions which lead to fidelity, and that without divisions fidelity would somewhat suffer. Now that is not the case, as has been represented by Dr. Stuckey. No man can say the different Missionary Societies are at all hampered in their work by uniting together, and I think the principal thing to us, as evangelised Christians, ought to be the coming of the Kingdom of God.

The first main objection is that of property, and I must agree that that is a very big thing. I may say that this question was brought up before the Commission, but we felt it was better left to be dealt with later; it certainly is a difficult matter, but if it comes to a choice between the interests of the Kingdom of God and L.S.D., then the L.S.D. has to go. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that is a matter of detail which cannot be dealt with by this Congress; many of the denominations are not overflowing with wealth, and the question of £5000 is a consideration, but that must not stand in the way of the Kingdom of God.

Then comes the question of ordinances. Suppose we have a co-operative Church, what would happen in case of the need for confirmation, the exercise of Baptism, and the conduct of the Lord's Supper, and so forth? That is certainly one of the practical difficulties, but it must not stand in the way of the larger scheme. I can see no great difficulty in the way of arranging periodically for these ordinances, or some arrangement could be come to for those who wished to travel to their nearest denominational centre in order to receive these ordinances. It seems to me that by a little arrangement and organisation all such difficulties could be overcome.

Then the constitution of the powers of this Advisory Committee, I think there has been a little misunderstanding as to that. This system of an Advisory Committee without compulsory reference has succeeded in China, as Dr. Stuckey pointed out; it did succeed in Victoria in the Pastoral Aid Society, and if the personnel of this Advisory Committee be strong and representative enough—of course, it must not be able to act without representatives of every denomination being present—then I think it will be wisely guided, and that its decisions will gradually gain in weight and authority, until, as in China to-day, the advice of the Advisory Committee will not be flouted. Mr. Rolland asked by what power would we compel? It would be by the compulsion of honour. If you read the report you will see it is preceded by these words, on page 12, par. IV.—“This Committee to have advisory powers only, but the —.” You see it is a pledge of honour and compulsion by honour, and I personally think that would be the only compulsion necessary.

Now I come to the fourth objection. There are what I may class under the heading of local difficulties; one or two of these have been mentioned. Mr. Wilkin said that while this co-operative scheme might work well at present, yet it would mean that the second generation would be lost to their parent denomination. Well, they would, and why not? If we believe that we are going into this scheme because we believe in something bigger, does it matter to the children of God if Presbyterians become Methodists, and so on? I therefore rule that out of account as one

of the things which, at any rate to me, is irrelevant; and I would say this, that by the time the second generation has arrived, the wisdom of this organic union will have consummated in some united form throughout the State. Mr. Holden has said that, referring to the country districts, you could settle everything by your City Committee? What is to happen to your local bigots, or loyalists? Well, if they can support a Church of their own locally, let them do it. We are dealing with aided Churches, with those which come under the Home Mission control, and if you find people recalcitrant to that extent, who say spend your money on us and give us our particular service, then I say rule that out; apply the financial cure, and you will find they will either succumb or file out.

Those are the four main objections which have been raised. There will be difficulties; but, brethren, we can meet all those difficulties if only the Committee will come to them, and I believe it will, in the same spirit that this Congress has come, in the spirit of prayer, and, above all, in the spirit which has, as its chief desire, the coming of the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the doing of His will in the State of Victoria.

It was moved that this Congress generally approved of the Report of Commission No. 1. This was seconded, and carried unanimously.

INDEPENDENT CHURCH, COLLINS STREET.

WEDNESDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 3, 1913.

SERMON DELIVERED BY THE REV. A. E. ALBISTON, M.A., AT THE
UNITED PRAISE AND INTERCESSION SERVICE.

My text is from the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 5th chapter, verses 16 and 17—

“Wherefore we henceforth know no man after the flesh; even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no more. Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature. The old things are passed away; behold, they are become new.”

“If any man is in Christ.” I have read recently that that phrase “in Christ” occurs no less than 240 times in Paul’s authenticated epistles. It is a phrase, therefore, that is not here a mere accident. It might be well for us if we not only endeavoured to comprehend this verse with intellectual understanding and agreement, but if we in addition so seek that relationship with Jesus Christ that we shall have a like conception of Him and of His relation to us to that which Paul had. My own conviction is that once we are able, honestly and intelligently and with deep gratitude and reverence, to speak in these terms, then all our denominational differences are solved. There can be no room for any distinct and separate nor any divided denomination when once we find our proper place in Christ, and I want to examine this term.

Obviously, it could not be used by a man whose thought of Jesus Christ was governed simply and solely and exclusively by that picture of Christ that he gets in the Gospels, unless at the same time he is able to get beneath that picture and beyond it, but if his conception of Christ in the days of His flesh, if his thought of Jesus be simply a thought of one who appeared long ago on the field of history, who had His place then, fulfilled His functions then, lived His life then, and simply left the world the heritage of His teaching, and, if you like, the inspiration of His example—if that is the conception of Jesus Christ that a man may entertain, then I say he will not know the meaning of the phrase that commands our attention just now. It is obviously a term that gets beyond the limited localised temporal

Christ. It is a term that truly gets beyond the mere historical Christ. "In Christ." No sooner do we use the phrase and give ourselves to its meaning than at once we begin to escape from the limitations of mere space and time. We are breathing an ampler, purer air. We have got into the eternities. Paul says, "We no longer know Christ in the flesh," but he does not mean that we have now outgrown the Christ of history, and made ourselves independent of that story we have in the Gospels. He does not mean that the Christ of history has become obsolete. He does not mean that he is impatient with the recorded fact, the well-ascertained, proved fact of Jesus Christ's character and life. Whatever may have been Paul's knowledge of the Jesus of the Gospels, that knowledge, we have some reason for believing, was a knowledge of the life of Christ in detail, and Paul was not the man to turn his back upon the fact of the historical Christ. That is the basis, that is the foundation of this higher, this transcendent Christ, and it is only he who has come first of all under the influence of Jesus of Nazareth, and has been able to appreciate the qualities of His character and the wonderful scope of His sympathy and the range of His ministry, it is only he who is found to demand the larger, living Christ, impatient himself of any restriction now, feeling that this Christ is one whose very nature demands a constituency wider than that which any people could give Him in the days of His flesh, who has relationships that cannot be expressed in any one period of time. The man who sees that, who appreciates it, and who demands, shall I say, a setting for his Master that shall be in keeping with the spaciousness of His Being, is he who has already appreciated Jesus of Nazareth, Son of Man, Son of God. When Paul says, then, "Now we know Him no longer after the flesh," he cannot mean that we have turned our back upon the Christ of history, but he does mean that any interpretation of this wonderful presence that is exclusive, that confines Him to one people and one age, any judgment, any classification of Him that rests upon mere temporal considerations, any appreciation of Him, for instance, that is simply dependent upon His Messiahship amongst the people of the Jews, must be set aside. It is unworthy, it is inadequate. "We know Him no longer after the flesh, but we know Him after the spirit." I have referred just now to the facts of Jesus Christ's character and of His earthly life. I would remain just a little while longer under the influence of those facts. It is when we have ourselves read the record of His wonderful life upon earth, and heard the exposition of it, that without serious effort on our part we have found ourselves in the circle of His disciples, and our hearts have burnt within us, and we have at last been compelled to testify that His presence meant nothing less than the presence of God. It was in His presence that we were able to believe in the forgiveness of sin. He seemed to have the right, by virtue of some strange intimacy with God, by the identity of His own will and person with God, to even pronounce the forgiveness of sin, and when we have heard Him say to one who has been in His presence penitent and self-despairing, "Thy sins are forgiven thee, go in peace and sin no more," we have heard Him use the same language to our own souls, and the forgiveness of sin has been assured. If we have been the subjects of anxiety, oppressed with the burden of present responsibility and disposed to undue care, it was in His presence we were able to believe in the discriminating Providence of God, and it is from Him we hear the words, "The very hairs of your head are all numbered." But it is He who is the guarantor of this truth, and in the contemplation of the hour of death, death that is so irrevocable and so final, that is such a satire upon our hopes, that threatens, as we must say, permanent divisions, it is then that our hearts are comforted and

assured. "I am the resurrection and the life." "Let not your hearts be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me," and we are disposed to say, "We can do nothing else." We do believe, and as long as He stays, and as long as He envelops us with His presence, and as long as we can breathe the atmosphere of His presence, then all our problems are being solved and our doubts and fears are allayed.

And now He is no longer visible. This Jesus of whom we have heard, whose reality we could not for a moment dispute, whose historicity seems to accredit itself and defy denial and disproof—yet such is the influence of this extraordinary personality upon us that now we realise that He is invisible, the heart itself cries out for Him—"Is He gone? Has He left this world? Is, after all, His only legacy to mankind wonderful thoughts, wonderful memories, a stimulus, if you like, from Himself, but only a stimulus, becoming weaker and weaker as the years come and go?" I declare to you that He has made Himself a necessity. I cannot do without Him. No use telling me to accept the doctrine of the Fatherhood of God. I have not got it as my own except in His presence. As long as He is with me, standing by me, infecting me with His own filial spirit, His own filial confidence, I can then think in terms of God's Fatherhood, and claim the relationship. But let Him go, and then I have no resource that is equal to the demand of the moment, and I cannot preach the Fatherhood of God. My own heart, my own fears, my own life will be a challenge and weaken my faith in my own message. I want Him. He has spoiled me. I cannot preach the forgiveness of sin; I have no confidence in that message unless He is there, sustaining me, upholding me, once more infecting me with His own confidence. I am baffled and defeated by the mystery and the tremendous necessity of death, but I am not so baffled when He is present and I can keep my eye upon Him. The testimony of this New Testament, and the testimony of Apostles, and of the living church right down the ages is this, that He who spoke in terms of departure was only, in His own gracious way, warning His disciples of a new arrival, and the Christ abides for ever. He is no longer limited to one locality, and the breadth and the depth and the length and the height of His own love which passeth knowledge, now, instead of being focussed, and, shall I say, epitomised and restricted in one body and in one period of time, becomes universal and unlimited and accessible. This same Jesus we interpret and explain still in the terms of the days of His flesh, still the same qualities of being, the same wealth of righteousness and wisdom and love, but, oh! so expansive and all-inclusive, so as to become the very atmosphere of our life, and the only word that does justice to the new relationship is this "in Christ." He spoils me for all others, and we have lost ourselves in Him, and in Him we are complete. My brethren, this is the very heart and essence of Christianity. It is not a mere statement of truth. It is not mere theological propositions. It is not even a statement of that great sublime transaction of Jesus Christ in His death upon the cross, the significance of which who can exhaust? Christianity, the religion of Jesus Christ, is nothing else and nothing less than Himself. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end." He comes and invades our life, and produces such an impression that it involves, almost in spite of ourselves, our own uplifting out of the ordinary setting of time, out of the purely physical and temporal, on to a high level of eternal relation. And such is the influence of this living Christ that we find He has displaced first of all our antecedents. Hitherto we have been content to run ourselves back, say, to Adam, a long succession of generations, age after age, from the present right back, however far you care to go, but always our thought is of the earth earthy. We are more or less in

touch with things that are visible; we are under the influence of a progressive evolution, if you like, but still, still we are of the earth earthy, and relating ourselves to some first man whom we will call Adam. And now Christ comes, and what becomes of that first man I cannot very well tell, but he is lost, he is displaced, and you and I, with a new consciousness, spiritual, eternal, enveloped by this wonderful Presence of the eternal Son of God, find ourselves now running back, back to the days that are lost—shall I say, in mists of antiquity? Somehow there is no mist about it, but we relate ourselves to Him who once said, "Before Abraham was, I am," and He becomes our antecedent, and we are strangely related to Him. If any man asks us now what is our age, the date of our being, what shall we say? We find ourselves using His language. We will say, "I have a consciousness that defies the calendar. I feel I never began to be." It is He that has Himself infected us with His own ageless life. "In Christ, and joined to the Lord, one spirit." He not only becomes our new antecedent, but He becomes our new person, our new environment. Hitherto we have been conscious of our own persons surrounding us; we have deferred to the spirit of the age; we have yielded to public opinion: we have been more or less dominated by the world, and now He displaces the world and makes a new public opinion and a new standard of judgment and a new code of manners. It is He, this Living Christ, who becomes our environment, related to Him as to one who preceded us before all time, but who has allowed us to share His own timeless Being, related to Him who now is a present fact, a reality, an atmosphere that presses gently upon us and conditions our very being. He comes even nearer than that. He enters and penetrates and succeeds in displacing that little egotistic individualistic self, and it dies in His presence. We say with Paul, "I have been crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live," and then, with Paul, we apologise for using language that is so inconsistent with our own consciousness. "Nevertheless I live." "I withdraw that," Paul says, and we withdraw it. I live? No, not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life that I now live in the flesh is nothing else than the life of faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me, and it was His cross that did it all. That captured at last our love. "In Christ." Any man who has got there will have to say to himself, "I am a new creation, I am thinking of myself in new terms, and I now insist on translating myself and my fellows into terms that are spiritual." Are you following me? Fancy! Seated together in heavenly places with Christ Jesus, and all else taking its own proper place, the body no longer in the ascendant, not discredited nor denied nor despised, but put in its own place, and once it finds its own place it is saved. But the spirit, my life, hid with Christ in God, sharing His eternity of Being, sharing the same life in all its wonderful qualities, sharing His righteousness, righteousness such that He who is thus in Christ cannot sink—cannot. Not the outcome of some awful effort, not the outcome of some severe self-discipline—cannot—a nature being his that is simply foreign to sin, and sin foreign to it. There is no mystery here—no man could associate the life that is in Christ with sin. Mutually repulsive, these two things! And righteousness native, instinctive, for which one has now a positive genius, sharing the righteousness that is characteristic of the divine life, possessing it, illustrating it in conduct, sharing the divine love, God's own sense of affinity with all spirits, and we know that we have passed from death into life, because we love the brethren and cannot help it. Ask me to shut myself up within the limits of my own Church? You are asking an impossibility. I cannot do it. You are all men; all men are yours, Paul and Cephas and Apollos; and all things are

yours, things present and things to come, the world, life and even death, all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ's is God's. Into that sublime unity we are introduced, and there we find ourselves and one another, and live gloriously. In Christ, sharing His life and the ethical qualities of His life and His own superiority to death, "because I live ye shall live also." I spoke just now of the body taking its own proper place. Aye, but in such company, in such associations, under the influence of such a presence, the body improves, and men who have passed into Christ have shown a change physically, and their faces have been lit with heavenly beauty, a glory, a light never seen on sea or land—the physical transfigured, the physical at times transcended. Jesus fasted forty days and forty nights, and His physical appetites were suspended, held in check, kept in abeyance, in suspension, so devoted, so concentrated was His mind, so devoted was His heart to the one prospect and the one mission and the one relationship that He sustained to God. And we, too, have we not known cases here and there of those who are so wrapped up in Jesus Christ, so held by His presence, so mastered by that wonderful personality, that time was lost sight of, hours came and went, with no thought of hunger, no thought of food, no thought of rest—the body transcended? We can go further, and we can say that by virtue of this new life which we have in Him we can contemplate without anxiety and without dismay the decay, the deterioration, the death of this body, and we will anticipate that last event, not as our defeat, but as the final victory of an emancipated spirit, freeing itself from a clog, no longer an organ for the expression of a free Christ-possessed soul, and, though the outer man decay, the inward man is renewed day by day. We look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen, for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal. Our life is hid with Christ in God, so that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we also shall appear with Him in glory. Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift. Amen!

THURSDAY MORNING, 4TH SEPTEMBER, 1913.

THE PRESIDENT opened the meeting by introducing the Rev. P. J. Murdoch, who was to present the report.

REV. P. J. MURDOCH.—I should like to say first that I rejoice exceedingly at the spirit of the Assembly to which I have to present this report. I rejoiced exceedingly in the spirit of the Commission over which I was privileged to preside. I cannot imagine a better spirit pervading any such meeting. The spirit was one of perfect candour and frankness in the exposition of views that were not acceptable to all the members, and at the same time there was a spirit of perfect charity towards those views which seemed to be contrary to our own. And along with these feelings there was an openness of mind, a readiness to be corrected, and I feel quite sure of this that a number of members of this Commission modified their position during the discussions we had, and that they are nearer to one another now in feeling and temper than they were when we began our sittings, and the same temper has been manifested in the sittings of this Congress. I feel as though the old commandment will become a new commandment to us, that we love one another, because the darkness is passing away and true light is shining upon us.

It is a great privilege to be able to present this report in so congenial an atmosphere. You have all, I have little doubt, read the report, and I do not need to go over the details. You know

that the Commission divided into denominational Committees, each of which presented a report regarding these matters which they thought essential to union. These were fully examined and summarised, and these are now placed before you. In spite of all we have been able to do, of course, difficulties remain, and these difficulties I must refer to briefly. You find the main difficulties referred to on page 27 of the Report. It has become manifest that there are three main difficulties in the way of organic union. The first difficulty is in the Church of England views regarding Orders and the continuity of the Church. "It is manifestly uncertain . . ." (quoted from page 27 of Report). That is a most significant fact; this is the new feeling in the Church of England which we trust will justify itself to minds of members of the Church of England throughout the Anglican community. Should this tendency of thought establish and justify itself, a happy solution of the problem of Orders would be within sight. That is, of course, the great difficulty.

The second great difficulty is the doctrine of "Believers' Baptism," as held by the Baptist Churches and Churches of Christ. "The close membership . . . and by Infant Baptism on the other." (Page 27 Report.) I mean by that what is implied regarding the state of children of believing parents, and what is implied is the duty of the Church towards these children.

The third main difficulty is connected with Polity. "The Churches of Christ hold . . . elements of both systems." (Page 28 Report.)

A fourth paragraph follows in the report regarding the difficulty that lies in sentiment, etc. Now there were two great convictions with which I believe this Commission set about its work. In the first place, we believed that all believers were one in Jesus Christ; I need not elaborate that point. We all know that all believers, whatever their ecclesiastical connection and methods, are one in Jesus Christ, but the second conviction, which I think we all held, was that this spiritual unity should, if possible, be expressed in an embodied unity. I think you will all agree with me that whenever, in the past, any disunion arose in the Primitive Church, we find limited efforts were made for checking it. There was once a threatening of a division between the Gentile and Jewish Churches, and Paul used all his statesmanship to divert that disaster, and so on wherever there was anything that threatened to break up an embodied unity, an effort was made to check that movement. I need not say more about that; probably we all agree that spiritual unity should, if possible, be embodied in a physical unity, but I have a great deal more to say about the third point. I doubt very much whether many of us have thought that matter out. The point is this, that in such a unity there must be diversity; you all acknowledge that I know, but are you prepared to recognise the amount of diversity that ought to be permitted in the unity of the Church? That there must be such diversity is surely manifest. One of our brothers referred to it in prayer this morning. Men are different, and always have been, and the diversity of men has shown itself in the diversity of the Christian mind. We hardly realise in our day how vastly different some of the men in the New Testament were from one another—how remote Paul was from James; how entirely different was the mode of thought of Peter from John; how completely apart was the method of the Hebrews and the first epistle of John, and yet each one of those modes of thought had its clear line of action with the mind of Christ. There are then immense diversities; there were then and there are now, and I cannot see why those diversities, so long as they can trace their hereditary connection in the mind of Christ, should not be included in one Church.

Let me say then, as briefly as I can put it, what sort of Church this should be. We would have, of course, in this Church, first of all, unity of faith. I suppose you have read the brief statement of faith which was presented to this Commission by the Presbyterian members of it. Page 22 of the Report—"I believe in God through Jesus Christ . . ." I take this as an illustration. Faith in Jesus Christ. I say there would be unity of faith in such a united Church; all the members would, whether they used these words or not, be united in that faith, but there might be, to my mind, the greatest diversity beyond that unity. I would permit, for my part, a diversity in the mode of expressing that central faith. For example, our Anglican brethren prefer to express their faith in the terms of the ancient creeds. I have no objection. I would rejoice to receive them in to the unity of the faith of this Church. I know that our Congregational brethren have different modes of making statement of their faith, and I do not see why there should not be a certain diversity of statement, provided the Church recognised that the various diverse statements covered those things that are essential to the faith of Christ. Besides that, of course, there would be a great deal of difference beyond these central things. I believe, for my own part, that the difference between Calvinism and Arminianism runs deep down into human nature, and that you are likely to have Calvinists and Arminians all the time you have a Church, both on earth and in heaven, too, perhaps, because it is human nature. Again, what we call sacramentarianism—I hope that is not a term which is offensive to anyone—is probably a form of thought that is connected with some deep lying thing in human nature. There are some men who naturally lay more stress upon a visible expression of essential truth than others do, and they will always lay more stress upon it, and I suppose in any Church there must be sacramentarianism and non-sacramentarianism. There is union of faith with diversity. Then, further, there would be unity in symbolism, in the outward expression of great verities. There would be this unity, that all the Church would observe the two great sacraments of the New Testament, but with that unity diversity would certainly be permitted. Why should it not be permitted for some to kneel at the Lord's table and some to sit; and for Baptism to be administered either by sprinkling or by immersion. There is no difficulty about that in the Presbyterian Church or the Anglican Church—we are both ready to immerse. Why should it not be permitted that both methods be used? If there are some who cannot see their way to accept baptism by other methods than sprinkling, why should they not remain in the Church and be sprinkled by ministers who believe in that mode? I cannot see why this could not be included in one Church. The only thing which seems to me to make a serious difficulty at this point is the case of those who are not prepared to admit to membership in the Church persons who believe that they have been baptised in infancy, or any adults who have been sprinkled and not immersed. I cannot see how it is possible for persons holding that view to unite in such a unity as we think of, because they would exclude from membership the vast majority of our fellow-Christians. I know that they admit them to communion, but they cannot see their way to admit them to Church membership. I hope if I have in any way misrepresented that position I shall be corrected. There would be, of course, great freedom in modes of worship in one Church, variety in their prayers, and in some a certain amount of ritual, and all these things might be permitted if they were governed by charity. That is to say, we could not have this united Church without a great deal of Christianity.

Then there would be unity of Government, of course, and let me say that that unity of Government would be, I think, made up in some

such way as this. There are three great modes of Government—the Episcopal, the Presbyterian, which has been adopted by the Methodists, and the Independent. Each of these mode of Government has certain advantages, and I do not think there would be much difficulty, if the spirit of unity prevails, in forming a Government, which I do not like to call a comprising Government, because I am not fond of compromises, but it would contain the best elements of these three differing conditions. And under this central Government which our friends the Congregationalists and Baptists are ready to accept, I think because they are prepared to refer to a central authority matters that concern the common weal of the Church. If they are prepared to do that, that means they are prepared to come into some such Government as I suggest. Now with this unity of Government there would be diversity. For example, let Congregational Government remain, so long as there is some method of referring matters from the congregation to the central authority; let Sessional Government remain in our Presbyterian congregations, and something similar in all the other Churches.

Then there would be a certain unity in service. We know that in Foreign Mission fields this unity is already being absolutely demanded, and to some extent secured; we were told that disunion in the Mission field was regarded as not only inexpedient, but sinful.

There would also be divisions in Home Mission work. I am quite aware there would be many difficulties there, but it would be absolutely essential that there should be readiness for a great deal of diversity within the unity in our Home Mission field, and here again we would require a very great deal of Christianity to carry things through. Possibly we would have to be prepared to surrender our pet methods.

Further, there would be unity in philanthropy, and you can see how vast a gain it would be if all our various philanthropies could be united.

Finally, there would be a unity in influence. We would approach the State with one voice; we would present ourselves before the community in which God has placed us, as a united body, and would no longer be subject to the reproach that we are a number of warring sects. The influence on the community I believe would be enormous. There is the possibility, brethren; why not carry it out? I have indicated the difficulties, and it would take a very large amount of Christianity to do this, and I am afraid our Christian peoples in the various Churches are not quite Christian enough to do this thing now. It would take an immense amount of sacrifice, an immense amount of forbearance. That it will come I have very little doubt; but this wide union that I have endeavoured to sketch I suppose we all recognise cannot come now. If you look at the Report, you will find that there are three denominations that are very close together: in connection with these a diversity has not occurred. These three are the Congregationalists, Methodists and Presbyterians. You know that at present there are negotiations for union coming on in connection with these three denominations, and what the outcome of these will be I am not going to forecast, but that these three ought to be united I think is beyond question. You will recognise that I feel hampered in speaking about the union of these three denominations, because negotiations are at present going on, and I am in the negotiations, and I do not feel that I ought to say much about the matter at present.

Now with regard to the whole of the Commission work, what is the outcome of it? Are we merely to sit down to-day and say, "Well, this Commission has presented a really interesting report; it has done a great deal of work; let us thank it and pass on, let us deplore

that the conclusions they have come to are impracticable, and no good can come of the enquiry." Is that the position we must take? I think not. In the first place, the work of this Commission has given a great impulse in the various Churches towards treaty making. Yesterday and the day before you were concerned with different treaties. The logical order of these Commissions would have been to have put this Commission first, and the outcome of this Commission's work should have been to create a feeling in favour of treaties. I am not criticising the order of presenting the Commissions; I know there are reasons why this should come last. I believe that this Congress has advanced greatly—the union feeling not only amongst those who have been present at the Congress, but also outside. I cannot, for my part, believe for one moment that the men who came together in this Commission, leading men in each of the Churches, went away uninfluenced, or but little likely to influence other people. They go back to their Church with a new feeling, and a far greater desire to effect some kind of treaty. These treaties that were proposed will receive a very considerable impulse from this movement. Then, further, the work of the Commission has created a better understanding; it has done that already, and it will grow. I understand far better now the position, let us say, that Canon Hart takes up, and I feel he understands the position I take up better. I understand far better the position of my brethren in the Baptist Church than I did before, and for my part I have walked a considerable distance on the way in my ideas of what might be included in a Union Church, and have no doubt others have done the same. Further, we propose a definite outcome of this discussion in future discussions. It is always, of course, a very unfortunate thing when discussion cannot result in speedy action; there is danger of evaporation of feeling, but with regard to these matters which have been put before us there are certain lines of enquiry which have been indicated and should be pursued, and we find there is a temper amongst the members which inclines them to continue the discussions, and along that line there is hope. There is, brethren, I hope you all believe, a great hope for the future. I should like to finish up on the note of hope. I have the greatest hope myself about the future. Of course, we know that God's way is often slow, and it is because of two things I suppose, partly because it is difficult to overcome the errors and blunders of humanity, and partly because God desires to be sure in the uplifting of His Kingdom. I feel sure that a movement is now going forward amongst us and throughout the world. Now, it is a great thing to be shares in so vast a movement. The time is coming when, far more than now, it will be recognised that there are two great essentials—faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and love of the brethren; and where these two great essentials are there may well be unity and admission of a wide and complete diversity.

MR. J. E. BRADBURY (Methodist).—With regard to the position that the Methodist Church takes on the Baptism question mentioned by the previous speaker, I may say that we are in a similar position to the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches. The Methodist Church, also, in a very large section of it, has adopted the Episcopacy; over twenty million of our Methodist people are under that Government, as many of you know, in the United States; also, we are not antagonistic to liturgical services. From the days of John Wesley to the present, the service has been read in some of our Churches, in many of the Churches in England, and in several of our Churches in Australia. I for three years read that service at one of the services during each Sabbath. One of my reasons for doing this was because of a request from numbers of Anglicans, and I believed that such a service would be suitable to them; and that is the broad Christian spirit, and it was not going against the rules of our Church, though I suppose the majority of the Methodists would have preferred the somewhat simpler service of our Church. One

speaker has said that a long while ago the Churches were running on parallel lines, but that now they were coming to converging lines, but it seems that during the past decade the progress of the movement has not been very fast; we have been moving something at the rate of an iceberg, and at times during that period the climatic conditions have been almost the same, very cold, with regard to the union of Churches. But if this Congress does not accomplish anything else with regard to organic union, yet I feel sure of this, that the ice is melting, that we are in a warmer atmosphere, that there is a possibility of accelerated speed with regard to the progress of the Churches in this direction; but I think that a smaller union ought to take place before the larger union. I think there are some Churches in our midst that would have been benefited if they had followed the splendid object lesson set by the Presbyterian Church some time ago in uniting the various sections of the Church. Now, if the Baptists and Churches of Christ and the various smaller sections who are strong on one particular point would unite before the larger union, I think their presence and arguments would have greater weight. I feel that, as far as the present is concerned, we are not ready for organic union; there are many difficulties, and there are the hard-shell sections of the Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, and Congregationalists, who do not care to worship in any other Church than their own. I was greatly interested only last year when I met a friend, a very fine type of a man, who for twenty years had been a member of the Presbyterian Church, but who now refused to worship in the very beautiful Church close at hand, a Presbyterian Church, with a very fine Minister, because an organ had been put in—a Kusterwhistle, I think he called it—and he went about forty miles every now and again to worship in a Church that had not got such an organ. Now we shall always have these hard-shell persons, and we are bound to respect their feelings; but I do not think we ought to be worrying ourselves too much about them, as there are some who will never be reconciled, and are bound to stand aside. Now, as there are five English Churches which would be uniting with one Scotch Church, and perhaps later on some of our more conservative friends—I am speaking of the Churches of Christ—I have an idea that the Scotch Church would benefit the five English Churches very much indeed.

With regard to the question of finance, I was very sorry a few years ago when that question of overlapping was brought up that the country friends in the Presbyterian Assembly turned it down. If they had not turned that proposal to unite down over £10,000 would have easily been saved by the Churches during these years, and neither Church would have suffered. This is a laymen's question, and a financial one also, and as we look at it the only logical conclusion is organic union with regard to the best work being done, the most successful enterprise being carried out, and the least money wasted.

REV. PROF. RENTOUL.—Had I the President's permission, the resolutions I would move would be these:—"This Congress earnestly desiring the spirit of unity of all the people of God in Christ Jesus, anxious, also, for the closer brotherhood of the organised Protestant Churches, in view of Australia's need and a call of the mission of the Christ to the world, yet recognising the many difficulties in the way of external unification or incorporation of the Churches with their diverse modes of administration and historical attachment, respectfully and warmly recommends the closer federal fellowship and brotherhood of the Churches and Christian organisations, so as to co-operate yet more effectively for the advance of the Kingdom of God in our land, and in the regions beyond. The Congress would desire to urge that such co-operation would be specially helpful and beneficent if directed in particular towards—

1. The cultivation of a closer and kindlier brotherliness between the ministers and leading workers of the various Churches, so as to discover common fields and methods of Christian service.

2. The prevention or remedy of social wrongs and evils, such as the ruin of girlhood, the murder of infant life, succour for helpless widowhood and orphanhood, the healing of hatred between the classes, and the grapple with the drink traffic and drink dens, which are a main cause of the crime that endangers our community.
3. Prevention as far as possible of overlapping in Church extension and the extirpation of proselytism.
4. Raising the standard of education and training of students for the Holy Ministry, and the rousing of the laity of our Churches to a worthier conception of the urgent need of an adequate maintenance for an educated ministry.
5. The securing of non-denominational Bible lessons in our State Schools.
6. The calling of our people back to the apostolic and also reformation truth that in the family, in family reading of Scripture, and prayer, and in family religion lies the secret of the Church's hold over the young of the Churches.
7. The retention of the youthhood of the Churches to Christian faith and life.
8. And such other objects of common endeavour as are found to be vital to the life of the Churches."

The first thing I want to say is that if you try for incorporation and do nothing else, you will try probably to the day of judgment. These differences of opinion may go on to the next beyond, but we want to do something immediately. Now, secondly, there is no Scripture anywhere for the opinion of external unification, and a greater man than myself, Dr. Marcus Dodds, has said it—there is nothing in Scripture that will warrant the external unification of the Church. That idea has been disastrous all down the Church's history; it is a notion of Rome which Queen Elizabeth tried to force upon England. Unification is nowhere spoken of, or, as Dr. Marcus Dodds puts it in one of his passages:—"Other sheep I have that are not of this fold only, them also will I bring—they shall hear my voice, and they are sheep of one fold. Nothing of the kind, but one flock, because one shepherd." And as he says the listening to Christ's voice brings the sheep to Him, and this being led by Him in answer to His voice constitutes the flock, and hence the flock is a spiritual one, and nothing is said here, or anywhere, of external unification. There may be various folds, but only one flock. The attempt to make an outer uniformity in the Church has been more disastrous than all else; it has caused all the bloodshed and persecution, and it has brought about much suffering and made far more divisions than if it had never been thought of. I love all the denominations, and there is not a Methodist Minister, or a Congregational, or a Baptist Minister in this land I am sure who is not my friend; at any rate, I am theirs. I say that the Presbyterian Church now is apostolic, and the Congregational Church is apostolic, too, and so are the others. As Professor Sanday says, in the first century the Church went through the Presbyterian phase, and in the second century they had the Episcopacy, and I think there should be no difficulty in amalgamating at least with Congregationalists. It is a difficult thing to build up a great organisation like Methodism, and I should think it a crime if I did anything to shatter, or break it down. I say it would be a terrible thing to shatter the solidity of Methodism. The best Methodists in Australia are afraid if you break it down it might not answer, because the thing you would put in its place has not been tested by history, and it might be an utter mistake; and it would be a crime to break down Presbyterianism, because the inter-relation with the old land and its history makes it dearer than life and stronger than death. I say you will be doing an unwise and mad thing if you attempt rashly or suddenly to make an amalgamation. What is needed in Australia and all places is a wider, stronger, and more

vitalised spiritual life in the Church. Wherever Jesus Christ is there is the Catholic Church. I say it is by getting all these organised Churches to preserve the sacred history of organisation that there will be a more vitalised spirit. It is by listening to Christ and hearing his voice that we are going to win Australia, and that is not a theoretical thing. We know that in the great Inland and Northern Mission that was founded last year, we have offered to support a Methodist Minister, because he is the only resident Minister in Darwin. That will take our money as well as our money, and that is a far better way than to break down Methodism.

Now with regard to the condition of things in Canada, I say it is doleful. I have a letter in my pocket from Canada which might make you laugh and it might make you cry, but I hope you will not argue from the point of view of Canada. Now, are we going to waste time? I thank Mr. Murdoch for his scheme, but would say that the difficulties between the Episcopalians and Presbyterians are far greater than he has stated; it is so great that Dr. Sanday said on one occasion that if you admit union you will rend the Anglican Church in twain. We must stop in face of an utterance like that, but we can have an inner union. Look at that world outside, and at the thousands who are separate from our Churches, and we can win them back if we will only try, if we will make the Council of Churches in Melbourne a really big and effective thing, increase the members and vitalise by a more conscious brotherhood. If the leading to God by the teaching of historical facts gives evidence of such a possibility you may talk of something like incorporation, but not until then. Therefore I say, gentlemen, turn your faces towards something practical. What will be the end of all this if we are not going immediately, and now, without spending time upon these vague generalities, to reach out our hands into the wealth of sorrow that is round about us in this City of Melbourne, and in this new land of Australia.

MR. A. C. RANKINE (Church of Christ).—I have sat during the last few days as a member of the executive of this Congress of Union, and listened with a great deal of pleasure and some degree of profit to the speeches made by the different brethren; but I must confess that some of the remarks which have been made by speakers have left an impression upon my mind that some of them think that the divisions in Christendom to-day have been brought about by the power of the Holy Spirit. If this is so, what are we here for—to try and bring about spiritual unity? I have been wondering, brethren, whether any Christian man in this assembly to-day believes that the Holy Spirit brought these divisions into Christendom. I have listened with a great deal of attention to what Dr. Rentoul said, but I am still convinced of the truth of the 17th Chapter of John, and of what the great Apostle Paul wrote in the 4th Chapter of Ephesians of the Church of Jesus Christ there, that they were to endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. I would like just to state to you the position of the body known as the Church of Christ in this State. Several allusions have been made to us as a religious body, particularly with respect to the subject of baptism. We are here to-day to speak frankly, and what I say is said in the spirit of kindness itself. I do not like to be in opposition to any of my brethren; but I have got a conscience, and I want you to understand that I am speaking simply as an individual, and not in a representative capacity at all. But with respect to the subject of Baptism, which has been brought up in connection with the report, and which seems to be a barrier in the way of a closer unity between ourselves and some of the other religious bodies represented in this Congress, I want to say that we demand from our brethren the Scripture, we are not going to rest upon the opinion of men; but we demand Scripture for sprinkling as Baptism, and for the Baptism being in infancy. If one passage of Scripture can be shown to us intimating that it is so, then we are prepared to adopt it and practise it, but as long as the Scriptures are there before us, then we must stand fast,

and our difficulty would be in accepting the Baptism as practised by some of the other religious bodies, that the symbol would be destroyed. If we adopted the sprinkling for baptism they would say we destroyed the symbol altogether, as far as we understand it. We believe that it is a birth and resurrection. You do not want any of us to come in for union for the sake of peace, and we want to do everything perfectly open and be frank with one another. I must say that the spirit which has been shown all through these meetings has been of a most Christlike nature. If we believe that Jesus prayed that all His disciples would be one, and we believe that, why cannot we go for organic union, instead of fiddling about with side issues. I believe that the day is coming when our Lord's prayer will be fulfilled, and that the unity for which he prayed will be actually carried out to the very letter, that there will be one Church in the world and one head of the Church. We shall all be one in Jesus Christ, and stop this tremendous waste of money and energy, and if the leaders of the Church will not take it up, then the business men will take it up and shame them. Let us pray and work that the Lord's prayer will be fulfilled, and that Jesus will be magnified and honoured. God has made unity, we do not have to make it, but what we have to do is to manifest the unity of the spirit.

REV. W. D. MACLAREN.—Part of what I have on my mind has been said in that charming exposition of to-day's report, and part by Dr. Rentoul. What I wish to say is first of all regarding freedom. I need not elaborate the point of freedom. I was delighted to hear the Convener of the Commission express the progress of thought that had been developed in the study of the subject by those who were engaged upon it. For at least a quarter of a century it has been on my mind that there is practically no limit to the freedom you must allow if you are to have any kind of union, and it is just because I can see that practically no Church or organisation is willing, or can afford to allow of such perfect freedom, that I side on the whole with the position taken up by Dr. Rentoul, that organic union, except in one form, is really a will-o'-the-wisp, and I would like to recall one or two expressions which were made yesterday in the interest undoubtedly of efficiency, but which practically implied that there would be some measure of concussion among men of reading. I have heard again and again phrases used which meant virtually concussion. That means, according to the old history, although it takes another form, refusal of fellowship; a great deal has been made of the unity of the spirit, and rightly so, but if order, an established order for decorum and efficiency, be a mark of the spirit, the very same Apostle who reminds us of that reminds us of the freedom of the spirit, and that wherever there is that spirit of the Lord there is freedom. Now, in the very first chapter of Chronicles which begins with the order of the unity of the spirit, ends with the perfect freedom of the spirit. The only bond that unites the beginning and the end is that middle section which is love.

Then if there is to be freedom of spirit, there must be absolute facility. Why has there been such a deadly silence as to the inclusion of Quakers and Salvationists; their name is never heard, and why. Because they are noted for their practical devotion; but they do not hold with external ceremonies, and yet I do not suppose there is a single brother of any persuasion who would deny them the highest place in our Christianity. Let us be practical—are we prepared for the union and inclusion not only of the non-sacramentarian, but of the anti-sacramentarian? Now, then, that means something more than freedom, it means facilities, and I could not help being doubly interested yesterday in observing with regard to Home Mission work how everything was really working out to a consciousness of the opportunities of the Church of the future. Then even minorities must have facilities made for the freedom of their expressions. I have conducted at one and the same moment an infant baptism on the old Puritan line, and a dedication service for the infant of very keen and ardent Baptists. I mention this to show how simple this matter is.

My last point is this—does it not seem that logic and practice should win? Is it not just as well to be logical at once, and the logic, therefore, of the freedom of the spirit and the facility of the spirit is federation, and not fusion. And that brings me to the point raised by the last speaker, that freedom and facility imply freedom to combine, and to combine in any issue and on any point. We have a right to combine more closely on certain methods, which we may deem to be more efficient, and it is this point I wish to bring particularly before you. In consequence of this closer degree of co-operation between those of a co-ordinate sentiment, federation means a practical federation without destruction of any of those great historic and noble needs. I bring this before you in order that we may avoid, in these glorious years which I hope are before us, being carried away by any scheme of fusion. We should rather have the freedom and facility which will express itself in a sufficiently visible bond of co-operative federation.

REV. S. G. MACLAREN (Presbyterian Ladies' College).—I was born in Scotland, and by the will of God I was born a Presbyterian; but it may be His will before I die that I should be something else, and on that point I have an open mind. I have not been identified with this Congress for the union movement, because all my energies were absorbed in other connections, so I have a perfectly free mind. I am perfectly sensible that the temper of this meeting is quite adequate for the discussion of anything that may come up, and it is quite right that there should be perfect frankness all round. It was perfectly delicious the other day to hear Canon Hart propounding the duty of being red hot; I never heard that propounded in such a calm and engaging way. He gave the impression that, after all, he was not so red hot as he would have us believe. It has been assumed that the unity which cries for producing its own Church is the unity of organic union. Now, I think it is quite a possible thing that God may have in His mind a unity of another kind, a unity in diversity. I was in Japan for some time, and we used to go up to the hills, to escape the heat of the plains, where there was an immense lake, with a supply of liquid water, surrounded by hills green, and woody to the tops. These hills were covered with farms and paddocks, and it was not necessary for the farmers to break down the divisions between the paddocks before they could join with one another. Possibly a very good feeling of unity could be produced among them if, after cultivating their own fields, if they had any time to spare, they would cross over and help their neighbours, and in the evening it might be a good thing to go over and inspect and rejoice in each other's crops. I protest most strongly upon what has been laid down here, that unless you are prepared for organic union, then you have no right to co-operate. That you are bound to carry it out under all circumstances, and at all times and in all places. Nothing of the sort. If a great number of people meet together in a country place, I see no reason in the world why for the moment they should not sink denominational differences, even if they intend to return to them afterwards.

There is another thing, I wish gently to protest against the assumption that our differences are due to original sin; that we have not got a Christian enough spirit to unite; that it is the want of Christianity, the proper Christian spirit that causes our differences—nothing of the sort. Our differences are intellectual; they are the product of our circumstances, our environment. For example, the Church to which I belong is a New Testament Church, and there are people like myself who—

(Owing Mr. MacLaren's sudden indisposition, the speech was not completed.)

MR. J. B. HOWIE (Society of Friends).—It may be coincidence, but I do not think it is, that I came upon this quotation this morning. It is from the pen of a man around whose name is centred much controversy, F. W. Robertson: "It is not by change of circumstances, but by

fitting our spirits to the circumstances in which God has placed us, that we can be reconciled to life and duty." It struck me that it was peculiarly appropriate to this Congress—"By fitting our spirits to the circumstances." It has been said by someone here to-day that the refractory diamonds of the Church will have to be left out, and it is possible that we members of the Society of Friends will have to be refractory. It may be possible to arrive at some plan of federation in the meantime that will include everyone, from the Anglican right through to the Salvationists and Society of Friends. I would just like to say, unofficially, that our position is an intensely positive one. We have no paid Ministers, not because we do not believe in a Ministry, but because we believe that every member is a potential minister, and may receive and follow the call of God—men and women alike. And we place a very high value on the ministry of women. In the same way we have no creed, not because we do not believe intensely in the great central tenets of Christianity—the life and death of Jesus Christ—but because we believe that these things are too great to put into words. In the same way we have no outward sacrament, because we feel that if there is a genuine baptism of the spirit, then there is no need for the outer form, and the same remark applies to the communion table. In saying this I wish it to be understood that I am not in any way criticising other Churches, and I think I may speak for all members of the Society when I say that if people think these things right and proper, it is right for them to use them. It may be asked, then, what use is there for members of the Society to take part in such a Congress as this, but I feel we want to be here with our brethren. To put it in another way, unity is a bigger thing than union, and we do feel strong unity with the members of the other Churches who are here present.

A speaker just now said that he did not suppose that members of the Salvation Army and the Society of Friends would be ruled out of any Federal Church, if it could be made sufficiently inclusive; and perhaps I shall not be misunderstood when I say that I do not think anyone here would deny that to such great souls as Elizabeth Fry and others like her, what if Jesus Christ came to earth to-day He would judge them for not taking the sacraments. It seems to me that the ultimate solution of the difficulties of organic union will lie along the lines of simplification. Just speaking here in all humility my feeling is this, that the tendency of the Christian Church will be more and more towards the spiritual, and men will find more and more that they do not need these outward things; and if it is ever found that these things are not necessary, I have no doubt the Churches of that day will have the courage to strike them out.

I should like to add my tribute to the magnificent work Mr. Wootton has done, and I have no doubt that in the back of his mind and heart there is a greater idea still, and that is the unity of the whole Christian Church, difficult and impossible as it almost seems to-day. I suppose everyone of us has, as his ideal, the great unity of all the Churches, both Roman Catholic and every other denomination. Such a Church can only come about through the unity of spirit, and such a Church will come and conquer the world for Christ. Men outside will say these are only dreams, but I would just quote "Dreamers of dreams! we take the taunt with gladness, knowing that God beyond we see. We weave the dreams that seem to us as madness into the substance that seems to be."

MR. A. H. BROWN (Representative of the Society of Friends, England).—I am very much obliged for your very kind welcome. I am the representative of a small body, and yet a body which is well known in England, America, and on the Mission-field; and although we are small in numbers, we have a somewhat long history behind us. I am out here because of the Defence Act, and surely in a Congress that is going for unity among the Churches, those who are suffering in similar difficulties have some place in your deliberations. I must just make a plea here for the boys who do not believe that Christ meant us to make armies under

any circumstances. I hope you will bear such boys in your hearts and souls, because I know boys who are suffering in very deed and truth, as men suffered hundreds of years ago, that our religion might be established.

Well, I have been in the North of the country, in New Zealand, and in many parts of Australia, and I found that what you are asking for to-day is already accomplished. I have been received kindly by members of all the Churches here. I have had your pulpits placed at my disposal, and when I have asked repeatedly, "Might I say exactly what I like?" the reply has always been, "Yes, say exactly what you like." That is a great thing, and I think we shall find that the deeper we go the more unity we shall have, and that it is only in the outward things, which seem to me the smaller things, there are differences; but deep down in the matters that really make for eternal life, there is a great unity. I have been in the Mission-field at Mapoon and other places, and I found that among the many Missionaries, it was the life of the men that mattered, far more than their theology. I believe that it is the life of a Christlike man that leads men to Christ; it is much more than the outward differences of our Churches.

Adjourned to the afternoon.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON, 4TH SEPTEMBER, 1913.

THE PRESIDENT read a letter written by Rev. S. G. MacLaren before being removed to his home.

The Business Committee met in the interval to give consideration to the resolution that Dr. Rentoul was desirous of moving this morning. In keeping with the line of business that we have hitherto adopted, we feel that we do not at this stage desire to give the opportunity for this to be moved in this form. At the close of this discussion there will be an opportunity, as in the former sessions, for a proposal giving general approval to the recommendations of the Commission. That proposal can be either adopted or rejected. The resolution will be:—

"This Congress desires to express its deep thankfulness to God for the manifest presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit in its deliberations, and resolves to appoint a Church Union Committee—

"(a) To further consider, mature, and take steps to give effect to the proposals already passed, taking into view the suggestions and criticisms voiced in Conference.

"(b) To carry on the work of investigation along the lines already laid down, and to extend the sphere of its enquiries so as to include Foreign Missions.

"(c) To co-operate with the Churches and Missionary Societies in promoting unity and active co-operation, and

"(d) To summon another Congress when the time seems ripe to help forward the cause of union, and hereby appoints the officers of this Congress, and the members of the three (3) Commissions as the Church Union Committee, with power to add."

(At the suggestion of Dr. Fitchett, the following was added):—

"That the Report is to be sent to the Churches here represented."

We felt the proposals of Dr. Rentoul would be sent, with the other matter, to the Committee, to take into consideration later on.

We shall resume the discussion of Report No. 3.

REV. GEO. TAIT.—It will be in November, just thirteen years, since I delivered from the chair of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria an address on the Union of the Evangelical Churches, on the basis of the central verities of the Christian faith, and in that address, I said: The solution of this problem is the chief ordeal and test

and standard of the Christianity of our Churches, and the churchmanship and statesmanship of their leaders. I say the same to-day. There is a great saying of Edmund Burke, which I think we should all write upon our hearts. He said: "If a great change is to be made in human affairs, the minds of men will be fitted to it. The general opinion and feelings will draw that way. Every fear, every hope will forward it, and those who persist in opposing this mighty current in human affairs will appear rather to resist the decrees of Providence itself than the mere decisions of men." I think we should remember that, that we may not hurry in this movement, and may not be discouraged by its slow progress. I value this conference as making it perfectly manifest that the current of opinion and feeling in this cause of union has been growing stronger. The pressure that the Spirit of God is bringing upon us is convincing more and more Christian men and women that we should do something to fulfil Christ's ideal, if we are to win and keep this Australian land for Him. I suppose most of us will admit that that prayer of Christ's, which has been so often here quoted, at least means this (I am quoting now the words of a letter signed by the leaders of the Churches in England and Scotland): "We agree in believing that our Lord intended that we should be one in visible fellowship," although some of the speeches we have heard to-day would seem to call it in question. We all believe that the Church is essentially a fellowship with Christ, and a fellowship with all those who are in fellowship with Christ, and it should be a fellowship in worship, above all, at the Lord's Table, in service, in obedience to the Lord's command to win the world for Him, and I do not see how anybody can say that this fellowship is made visible to the world in a parish in which there are, as we heard the other day, some two or three hundred Christian people, and five or six separate places of worship. I think it is perfectly manifest that we should put visible fellowship at the head, and any doubt about this arises from misunderstanding of what is meant by union. I think Mr. Murdoch made the meaning of the members of the Commission perfectly plain, that we did not look for, as one speaker described the proposal, external unification. It is the very opposite that we aim at. It is a unity with diversity, the visible unity which Christ desires for His Church, that it may effectively witness for Him in the world, not uniformity over the whole field of doctrine and polity. As Bacon says, "They be two things, unity and uniformity. In unity there must be diversity; the less diversity the less rich the union; the greater the diversities that can be held together in unity, the richer the union." So with the Church. Its power and glory is that the spirit of God holds the wide variety of gifts and experiences He bestows on its members in a rich union. Then we have also heard the phrase "organic unity," as if an organic unity was a mechanical unity. Now, my conception of an organism is that it is living, that it is not a machine. The human body is an organism, unity with diversity. That is what is meant by organic union, not any mechanical union at all. Then some of the principles that were expressed to-day seemed to me, if you logically carried them out, to be this, that it would not in the least be contrary to Christ's mind in regard to the Church if every man carried his Church under his own hat. Now, we have an organic union, I suppose, in the Presbyterian Church, and in all our Churches, but there is great diversity of opinion in them, and in these days diversities of opinion do not run along denominational lines, but right across them. I am quite sure that I, in my view of Christian doctrine and Christian polity, am very much nearer men in other Churches than I am to many in my own Church, and I am sure it is the same about what constitutes the substance of the message of the Christian faith, so that we have diversity of opinion in all our Churches, and what we really want is not more uniformity, but less uniformity. The other day I came across this rather amusing fact, that in the time of King Edward when they were making

a great many Acts of Parliament which were very foolish, very futile, and a great many of them very cruel, they actually passed an Act to prevent diversity of opinion. We have all come to believe that that was very stupid, but I think we in the Christian Church have been doing something parallel to that—we have been trying to shut out diversity of opinion by long theological creeds. We have not succeeded, and we cannot possibly succeed, and so I go with Mr. Murdoch in advocating a religious creed and not a theological creed, a religious creed expressing the attitude of the Christian heart to Christ. It would be very short, and I think if you get that you must let everybody form his own theological creed. By that means you will very much sooner get to something like unanimity in the expression of your theological creed. I do not think there is anything tends to set a man more against a doctrine than to be compelled to accept it on pain of exclusion from the Christian Church. If he is perfectly free to accept it or not, he is much more likely to accept it. We have been trying to keep the Church one in doctrine and true to the Christian faith by means in which Christ had no trust, by external means like Acts of Parliament and long theological documents, instead of trusting, as He did, to the working of His Spirit in the hearts and in the minds of those who take up to Him the true Christian attitude. I hope none of us will be discouraged by the diversity of opinion that has been expressed here. We are only at the beginning of this movement, but I would take for myself and give to you individually and to this Congress collectively a message from Luther: "See that thou depart not from the faith that God wills to do a great work through thee."

REV. F. C. SPURR.—There are two things I want to say this afternoon. I thought this morning that Dr. Rentoul partly misunderstood what Mr. Murdoch had said to us. There was no idea of such a unity as would mean a dull and monotonous uniformity, and crush out all those individual expressions of piety which have found their historic manifestation in the various Churches. It seems to me we must begin from the point of view of life. Can anyone doubt that that great movement to which we all owe more than we can ever tell, the Evangelical Movement in the 18th century, of John and Charles Wesley and Whitefield, was an attempt to express that life which God was pouring into His people. They never meant to break away from the Church, but they sought to express life, and we may say the break was inevitable. Mr. Murdoch, this morning, in his resume of the work of the Commission, showed us that it was possible to unite things that seemed to be so diverse that they must ever remain apart, if we could come to a synthesis of life. We are here for practical work, and I want to put before you the opposite view to that which was put before us by the representative of the Churches of Christ. It seems to me that if any one body is going to take up an attitude which practically amounts to unchurching the rest of Christian people, we may as well disband at once and talk no further about it. Speaking for the denomination to which I belong, I must admit that Baptists have appeared to be, in the eyes of a great many of their fellow Christians, the one stumbling block in the way of union, and there has been more than a little justification for it. That hard-shell spirit which expresses itself in America and in some of the narrower-minded amongst us certainly is a barrier, a permanent barrier to Christian Union, and one cannot help asking this question. When I listen to the claim which is made on behalf of immersed believers, and the claim that this act of immersion, joining the Church in this way, constitutes a proof that the person is regenerate, and only as such has a right to join the Church, I am bound, as an honest man, to look round and to ask if the fruits of religion in the lives of those persons are so much superior to the fruits of religion in the lives of persons not immersed as to warrant that claim, and I feel it cannot be so. Of two men, one immersed, who is spiteful, narrow-minded, uncharitable, bigoted, with an un-Christian

heart and a lack of missionary disposition, and another, who has all the kind graces of Jesus Christ, who has not been immersed, a thousand times over give me the latter. I just want to call attention to the olive branch, if I may say so, that has been held out in this Commission on the part of the Baptist representatives. Would you turn to page 15 in the report, and notice this. (I am more sorry than I can tell that I shall not be here to see this carried out. That Commission has been one of the most delightful things in my life—to come across High Churchmen like Canon Hughes and Canon Hart, to meet with perfect charity and candour, and understand each other as we have never understood each other before—you may thank God that you have done as much as this if nothing else comes of it). Page 15, No. 2: "That which distinguishes them (Baptists) from other Churches is not primarily the mode of administering the sacrament of baptism." And on page 18 you will find: "The Committee think they are warranted in saying that our people, generally, would be prepared to leave the question of baptism quite open—for each person to decide according to his conscience—and not to make it a test of Church membership." (Mr. Spurr continued reading extracts from page 18 down to the words "would remove the present difficulty.") I freely admit, and with a great deal of shame, that our Baptist people have been extremely remiss in dealing with the children in their congregations. We have put so much emphasis upon the conscious accepting of Jesus Christ by adults that we have forgotten the place of the child. Now, there has been restored within ten years a service of infant dedication, and I think our people are coming to understand that with charity we can come to a synthesis between things that seem now to be quite apart. St. Paul distinctly did say that the child of Christian parents was placed in a position of privilege not possessed by one born of heathen parents. The Church of England baptises its children in infancy, in common with perhaps the greater part of Christendom, but it gets in its service of confirmation what we get by our service of baptism. We have learned in this Commission, and I think our people have learnt, that those who practise infant baptism are not guilty, as has been alleged against them, of introducing children in a mechanical way to the Church of God. They do demand of those children, when they come to riper years, that they shall take upon themselves intelligently the vows made for them. I am only speaking for myself, but I think with regard to the mode of baptism, too, it is time we made a concession and understood and allowed that Jesus Christ did not bind His people to any one mode of administering this rite. If we are going to confine ourselves to a scriptural mode of administering the sacraments, is there a single one of us who has ever celebrated the Supper of the Lord as He celebrated it? We all have adapted it in the course of ages, and I do not see why there should not be the same liberty in the administration of the other sacrament as in this.

REV. PROF. ADAM.—This Commission has had the largest and the most difficult task to perform. The others have been able to formulate various proposals to be submitted to the Churches; this Commission has a greater difficulty in formulating any such definite proposal. We shall hear at the conclusion what exactly it is intended to do with regard to this report. We have to-day had two ideals set before us, one the ideal that was presented so ably by Mr. Murdoch in his opening address, the idea of organic unity of the Churches under one central governing authority, but with sufficient room left for diversity with regard to details of doctrine and worship, and questions of polity. The essential point, however, was it was an organic unity, and one central authority under which this widely diversified body was governed. The other ideal presented to us this morning was the perpetuation of existing denominations, but with some measure of co-operation with regard to certain things, and possibly federation. That ideal was ably presented

to us by Dr. Rentoul, and also to a considerable extent by Mr. W. D. Maclaren. Dr. Rentoul qualified his advocacy of the continuation of denominations by a statement that he made towards the end of his speech, in which he expressed the hope that the Presbyterian and the Congregational Churches might be united. He thought that the time was ripe for such a union, and he said he had thought that this Congress might have concentrated their attention on that as a practical question, but he was strongly opposed to the idea of any union or fusion or amalgamation of the Presbyterian and the Methodist Churches, and, I suppose, also with the Anglican Church. Now, Dr. Rentoul, in referring to the various things in which there might be co-operation, included among those things the training of students for the ministry. I was particularly pleased to notice that he favoured co-operation on this point, because that was the point which the Commission I was convening had to deal with, and there seemed to be on Dr. Rentoul's part at that time rather an opposition to what was proposed. I am very glad to see that he approves of the co-operation of the Churches in regard to this very important matter of the training for the ministry, but, while he indicated his approval of that, he laid his finger upon what will turn out to be one of the gravest difficulties in any practical scheme of co-operation, in providing a co-operative course of lectures. On the previous occasion he emphasised that difficulty as the difficulty of securing a uniform standard of entrance, so that the students, on entering on this common course, might be in a position to benefit by the lectures. Undoubtedly, that is a difficulty. Now, how is such a difficulty as that to be overcome? I believe that something can be done by a joint committee arranging for something in the way of a common standard, but I do not think that we shall ever entirely overcome this difficulty until we have one governing authority, prescribing the conditions of training for the ministry, and that exactly points to the inefficiency of mere co-operation between the Churches having different governing authorities, and the necessity of one governing authority, if you are to overcome these difficulties in an adequate way. The same thing applies to co-operation in regard to Home Missions and Church Extension. What is recommended by Commission No. 1 is the appointment of an Advisory Committee. So far, good, and we have a faint hope that such a Committee may do much good, but it was pointed out that this Committee would not have compulsory powers, and that different denominations might still go on their way and snap their fingers, so to speak, at the Committee, and put no end to overlapping. The only way to overcome that is again organic union, a government having authority to say where Churches shall be planted and where not. There is another difficulty about co-operation. I agree with Mr. Murdoch in the general principle he laid down, that effective co-operation in regard to such questions as Church Extension and Missions and training of students and so on can only take place between Churches between whom there is no barrier, in the way of principle, to an organic union. It is only when Churches are in such a position that they recognise each other, and recognise that there is no absolute barrier in the way of union between them, that there can be effective co-operation. I will illustrate that point. In this Commission there are various Churches. For example, there is the Church of Christ. We have had some excellent addresses from brethren of that Church, and from somewhat different points of view. There were some who expressed their disappointment that their Church had not been represented on the Commission about the training of students, and about the unifying of Home Mission work. The leaders of that Church decided not to be represented on these Commissions. Why? Because they felt that they, holding the views they did about baptism, could not place themselves under any limitation as to where they should plant new Home Missions or start new churches, because the point on which they based their *raison d'être* made it neces-

sary for them to maintain absolute liberty. If you take up the position that the point on which you differ from other Churches is of vital importance, I do not think there can be co-operation or a standing aside to let others do the work; you must feel obliged to do the work yourselves. So that effective co-operation can only be secured where there is no absolute barrier in the way of union.

In regard to federation, Mr. W. D. Maclaren said he did not believe in fusion as the objective in amalgamation or organic union, but in federation. To my mind, that is a practical thing when you have Churches occupying different territorial areas, for example, between a Church in Victoria and a Church in New South Wales, each under its own government, but I cannot understand how federation can be adequately carried out between Churches occupying the same field. It seems to me that to talk of federation in such cases is only to confuse the issue. The only federation between Christians occupying the same territorial area is that they be under one effective central government, which will prescribe conditions, and that is organic union, as I understand it. Of course, that does not mean, as we have heard admirably expressed, uniformity. It may leave wide room for diversity in matters of doctrine and worship and polity, and no other ideal is possible to entertain than such a unity as would involve a very large measure of diversity. I think this report contributes towards the large subject of organic union in two respects, in that it adds to our knowledge and tends to remove difficulties in two ways. One has been dealt with by Mr. Spurr. The information we have got from Mr. Spurr and those whom he represents, as to the attitude of the open Baptists towards this question, does remove one possible difficulty, and opens up a way whereby they might be brought into an organic union. The other contribution of importance which this Commission makes is from our Anglican brethren. Formerly, it had been supposed that the Anglican Church took such a view of the ministry in the other Churches as would make it impossible for them to contemplate union with those Churches unless all the ministers would be re-ordained, and that was a hopeless barrier. We have been told, and by the High Church brethren of the Anglican Church, that that is not in their view an essential, that while they regard historic continuity as of importance, yet they do not regard that as so essential that a ministry which is not episcopally ordained is invalid. They hold that such a ministry may be sufficient for the word and the sacraments, and if they grant that, it seems to me they have granted everything that is essential. In these two respects the report does solve difficulties and open up a way to organic union.

REV. F. V. PRATT.—I do not want to go into the question of baptism, as I do not regard it as of vital importance on either side. Our friend, Mr. Rankine, said this morning that he had a conscience on the matter. So have I, and just because I have a conscience on the matter, I baptise children. As I read the New Testament—of course, no instructed Christian will take as of authority the last verse of Mark's Gospel—the only command of our Lord Himself about baptism is not to the baptised, but to the baptisers. His command is this: "Go ye and make disciples of all nations, baptising and teaching." That is a command to the disciples, and it is a command to *make* disciples. That is the verb, and the way that verb is to be carried out is expressed in the two words, "baptising and teaching." It is as though I said, "Make a garden, clearing and planting," and I believe that is the normal Christian order. We first baptise, we first enrol by baptism in the school of Christ, and then teach the Christian law. I think that point of view ought to be put very briefly, because I suppose the majority will agree with me that it is quite as much a matter of conscience with us to baptise children as it is a matter of conscience with our friends to insist upon the immersion of believers. Of course, there is another point of view. The critics tell

us that perhaps even these words at the end of Matthew's Gospel about baptism ought to be excised, and it is quite a debatable point as to whether there is any direct command in the New Testament for either of the sacraments usually observed amongst Christians. Perhaps the only sacrament for which there is a direct command is the one sacrament that neither you or I have ever observed, and, as far as I know, the only one who does observe it is the Emperor of Austria once a year, and that is, to wash one another's feet. Our Lord does definitely say: "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done unto you." We have let that go by the board, and it is quite a debatable question as to whether baptism and the Lord's Supper are of perpetual obligation. If we are ever to have our truly united Church, surely we cannot exclude from it the Salvationists and the members of the Society of Friends, who have done so much for the spirituality of religion. Then we will need to make all ordinances optional. If any like to celebrate them, let them do so. If they find the symbolism useful, let them use it by all means. "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God." I read that in the New Testament, and I think it is a very bold position—too bold—for any of us to take up to exclude from our membership any man of whom the Apostle says that God dwelleth in him and he in God. We have then to confess that position, and I think we will find a way out by making all external observances optional in the United Church. At present, however, I have a conscience about baptising infants. I also have a conscience about unity, because I believe a visible unity is the Lord's will, and we must not be fascinated and smitten dumb by great names, even by the great names of Dr. Rentoul and Dr. Marcus Dodds. I believe that in the New Testament we have an ideal of unity sufficiently visible, at any rate, to embrace the world. I think those divine words in the seventeenth chapter of John's Gospel could only have come from the divine heart and the divine lips of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the unity He prayed for is primarily a unity of persons, primarily a spiritual unity, but, given first a spiritual unity, the natural thing is for it to manifest itself in an external and visible unity; and so our Lord thought of a unity sufficiently visible at all events to convince and comfort the world. Now, if you think the kind of unity we have at present, where you have four competing denominations in one little town of two or three hundred people, is ever going to comfort and convince the world, I don't. Competition has been pleaded for. Now, competition is a commercial motive, all right in commerce, but the ideals of commerce are not the ideals of the Church, and the motives of commerce are not the motives of the Church. It is not necessary in the mission field; what competition did Livingstone have, I should like to know? What competition did Chalmers have? They did not need competition, that miserable, external, commercial spur, to lead them to their devoted lives, and why should we? If we really love the Master, we shall not need it. And take other organisations. Take the Manchester Order of Unity. Take the Freemasons. They are one order, as far as I know, throughout the world. It does not seem to affect their zeal in the propagation of their truths, or their loyalty to their orders, and if the Masons believe enough in Freemasonry to be loyal to it and work hard for it, though it is one order throughout the world, surely the followers of Jesus Christ have at least as much devotion to their cause, and as much loyalty to their Divine Master.

I want to just suggest two practical things that I think might be done almost immediately. One is in Home Mission work. The problem, after all,—and I speak that whereof I know—is not the problem of the small towns; the problem is that of the lonely settler, who cannot be adequately ministered to by men who have to return to a centre every Sunday. I think we want a list taken, certainly in some parts of Australia, and

we want a strong Bush Missionary Society. We want to send out vans, well equipped, with sensible men, with Bibles and good books—not goody goody books, because they are not good—to minister to these people, and to go on from place to place. Now, surely all the Churches could unite in the formation of a strong Bush Missionary Society.

Might we not also have in Australia a united Australian Hymn Book? In a new Congregational Hymn Book coming out in England there is a Colonial Section, but I would advocate something more than that. We all can sing together. We rejoice in that. In all our hymn books we have hymns by Roman Catholics and Methodists and Anglicans and Presbyterians and Unitarians and Congregationalists, and it would advance the cause of unity if we could unite to form one service of song, one book for the Churches of all our different denominations in Australia. If we are ever to have unity, it will come, of course, by simplification. It has been said finely that Christianity is a religion of centrance, and not of circumference, and we see the one centre is Jesus Christ. The fault of the creed makers has been that they have tried to draw a circumference and say we must come within it, but we are coming to a wiser point of view. We will be true to the one centre and make our own circumference where we like, so that you can have the widest possible circumference with a visible unity. There is a little poem called, "No Sects in Heaven," and, in spite of Mr. Murdoch, I do not think there will be any sects in heaven. We feel that the ideal heavenly home and the sectarian ideal are quite incompatible. We pray every day, "Thy Will be done *on earth* as it is heaven." If we pray that prayer sincerely, and if there be no sects in heaven, then surely we must pray and labour that there be no sects on earth.

PRINCIPAL A. R. MAIN.—There are two things particularly that I wish to do, express my own personal joy at being associated with such a Conference as this, and my appreciation both of the spirit manifested in the Congress gatherings and in the work of the Commissions previous to the Congress. It seems to me that nothing but good can possibly come from gatherings such as these, even where they do not all agree. Personally, I have already received much good in learning to know better the opinions of those who have been labouring in the cause of Christ, and from the point of view of showing that there may be a kindly spirit, even with those differences which, unfortunately, divide us, there is much gain. A gentleman yesterday said to me he thought there was too much amiability in this Congress for much good to come of it. I gather that some have been endeavouring to-day to remedy the deficiency, but, personally, I have no wish to seek to further the cause of union by departing from the spirit of perfect charity and fraternal love; I do not think we shall help much in that way.

The next thing is this. I take it that those who represent a smaller number of people will be just as welcome in their expression to this Congress as will the others, and so in making a frank statement of the position as it appeals to me, I am perfectly within my rights. The great charm about the report of this Commission particularly, to me and others, is this, that it has been a movement directly aimed at organic union. The reason that we were not represented on the former two Commissions was not that we wished to seem uncompromising, but rather that we might avoid the appearance of taking up an uncompromising attitude. It seemed to us that until this greater question was settled—if it can be settled—it was idle for us to come in on the Commissions with regard to overlapping, and Home Missions, as we might have had to take up an attitude which would have seemed to hinder rather than to help. We are glad because of the work of this Commission. Ever since Churches known simply as "Churches of Christ" have been represented in Australia, we have been pleading for organic union, and while some may think the report shows we have not gone very far in that, yet

we rejoice in this, that at this day the plea for organic union of those who love Jesus Christ is at least no strange thing. It may seem to some the irony of fate that those who have pleaded for this union should be those who seem to stand out most. With reference to two things, our Churches seem to be uncompromising. Doctrinally, the Churches of Christ are agreed with most of the statements that have been made in this Congress and with those which appear in the reports from the various Commissions. The only credal statement to which we ask subscription is that which no less a theologian than Dr. Binney has pleaded for as all-sufficient and non-exclusive. They who are prepared to accept the divine Sonship, the Lordship of Jesus the Saviour, may by virtue of their common loyalty to Him unite. I would welcome union with any man who believes in Jesus as the Lord and Saviour, and I heartily agree with those expressions that have been made to-day, that with that there may be lack of uniformity and a variety of detail. It seems to me that in the Church of the Apostolic days there must have been just as much variety.

With reference to the subject of baptism, I do not—I nearly said, we do not—place the subject of Christian baptism in the very forefront of the Gospel of Christ. I do not believe that baptism, whether by sprinkling or pouring or immersion, is in itself of any account. It is only as it is a sign of surrender to Jesus Christ by one who believes in Him that it matters. So I would not like any to fancy that Churches of Christ generally make the end of Christian life this matter of baptism. But I regret that we cannot in this matter compromise. If I could say I would gladly accept as Church members those who had not been baptised, would that commend itself to the great body of this Congress? Decidedly not, when it is distinctly stated (bottom of page 62) that “some Churches might feel a difficulty about uniting with those who so minimise the value of baptism as to admit to the Lord’s Table and to full membership persons whom they regard as unbaptised.” Again, I do not think the difficulty is merely there. There are differences within the Churches who accept infant baptism, nearly as great. Some of you believe with all your hearts that only those who are children of Christian parents should be baptised; some believe all should be baptised; but I want you to believe that if we are not in this now, it is not because we are not vitally interested in the cause of union. So far as we can, up to the point where we believe principle will allow (we may be wrong in what we believe principle to be) we shall gladly help on the cause. I wish that we could understand one another better. I cannot compromise in things which are the Lord’s and not mine, but I am prepared to work with those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth.

REV. R. DITTERICH.—With regard to the remark made this morning about the work of the Holy Spirit in the divisions of Christendom, I am firmly convinced that many of these divisions are the work of the Holy Ghost. The Spirit of God may see fit to work in one way in one age, and may at a succeeding time work in the hearts of God’s people in the direction of an organic unity of those divided parts. I am convinced that it is the Spirit of God which is working in the midst of this gathering and leading us in the direction of a larger and deeper unity. We should be rash, perhaps, if we expected any immediate union as the result of this meeting. If we get a clearer understanding of each other’s position and a deeper desire to work in the direction indicated, we shall have been abundantly justified in coming together. It seems to me that with some of the brethren matters are regarded as vital which to others are quite secondary. There are brethren who uphold a certain rite, and the administration of that rite in a certain form, as vital. I am convinced that they are conscientious in that. They think that is the mind of Scripture. I am absolutely convinced, for my part, that their position is unscriptural, or, rather, that our position, both as regards the mode

of baptism, and the subjects of it, is thoroughly Scriptural. It seems to me that if ever we are going to unite, it cannot be in the trend of modern thought, and along the line of mere ordinance. "By one Spirit ye are baptised into one body," and I hold we are baptised into Christ's death by that Spirit. Convinced as I am of the Scripturalness of our own particular mode, although we allow all sorts, yet I feel I would not be true to the real spirit of Scripture and the real mind of Christ were I to insist upon my form of this or that practice being made an essential of Christian unity. A true unity, as I apprehend it, must be inclusive, and we must go to every individual to say whether his children shall be baptised or not, and whether by sprinkling or immersion or any other way. I do not see how we can unite unless we allow this larger liberty. I would far rather go to the other extreme, and say: "In God's name let us do without any ordinances, so long as we have the reality, and can join together and express our common life there, and let men who will, have ordinances, but by no means make them essential."

In the previous two days we have agreed to recommend a certain course with regard to overlapping, and a certain course with regard to training of candidates for the ministry. I think if we follow that out logically, we have all to expect and work for corporate union. If I am a layman living in some remote country part, and it is decided that the Methodists shall withdraw, and that only the Baptists, say, shall be left in that place, then I am to join in with those people, I am to sink my own denominational differences, I am to hand over my children to the training that shall be given in connection with that particular denomination. We have agreed to that as a matter of policy, and in doing so we have said that the matters concerned in the differences of the Churches working there really do not essentially matter. If that is true, then we are logically bound to go on and say, "We can agree in some common united form of worship and of Church government." I hold that to be incontrovertible. On the other hand, here is a difficulty. Suppose that in that locality the Church of Christ were the only one left to minister to me and my people. I have not been immersed. I was baptised after I became a believer, but not by immersion, would I be admitted to the Table of the Lord in the Church of Christ? Would they recognise me as a member of their Church if I so desired? Unless I misunderstand them, they would not. If those who receive the one Spirit of God, in whose hearts the love of Jesus dwells, cannot meet at the Lord's Table and cannot be recognised there on the ground of their common faith and their common Christian life, then, I say, so far as that is concerned, it is an unsurmountable difficulty. There is a centre of denominations agreed upon doctrine, ordinances and practical Church government. I think three Churches, the Congregationalist, the Presbyterian and the Methodist, could without much difficulty agree upon those points. The Commission's report shows that. There is a right wing, if I may so speak, the Church of England. We have had promising statements about that, but, still, we know there are certain difficulties arising on account of the question of orders, carrying with it the validity of sacraments and so forth; and there is a left wing, if we may so speak, in which the particular ordinance as represented by the Church of Christ is at present a bar. Now, we must pray for the union of all in the common bond of faith, but in the meantime I think if with all charity and intelligence and knowledge we can proceed to work along the lines of these three, to which I have referred as the centre (merely by way of description), we may have reasonable hope that here, as it is hoped in Canada, we shall see a practical unification, and we may pray and hope for the larger union.

MR. W. H. ALLEN.—If the gentleman who has just spoken will come to the Swanston Street church on Sunday morning, I shall be very glad to see him. I am speaking of what I believe to be the position of the

Churches of Christ in America. It is the Lord's Table—He may accept, He may reject. If you will all come, there will be no questions asked, and you may observe your privilege as a child of God.

REV. LEYTON RICHARDS.—I want to go back to the beginning. Possibly we have lost sight a little of the practical and positive things which were laid down by Mr. Murdoch in that most eminently statesmanlike speech. It was the speech *par excellence* of the Congress. I am a Congregationalist; Mr. Murdoch is a Presbyterian. If Mr. Murdoch had allowed me to recite that speech, I could have done so with a full heart and a free conscience. In that statement is an evidence of unity. Mr. Murdoch has made a statement; I would subscribe *in toto* to everything he said in recommending this report. In drawing to a close, he named two essentials which lay at the centre of any Church of Jesus Christ; one was faith, the other was brotherly love. Principal Main, in his statement just made, almost tabulated that when he said he would accept anyone who accepts Jesus as Lord and Saviour. Give me that statement, don't qualify it by the addition of sacrament, form of sacrament, ritual, orders, or anything else, and I subscribe to it. That means that if we can get down to those positives named by Mr. Murdoch and can agree there, we are getting to the root of things. Faith in Christ and brotherly love. We gather together all who have those. What follows? What Mr. Pratt pointed out and what Mr. Murdoch himself indicated, that we must allow the utmost diversity of opinion and practice in regard to sacraments, their use, their non use, the form of the sacrament, and so forth. In regard to Church government in local affairs, in regard to orders and ritual—and I would say this particularly as a Congregationalist—there must be allowed the utmost liberty concerning the absence of any of these things. We as Congregationalists, unfortunately, too often insist upon negatives. We say we have no oversight from an outside body, we have no creed. We are apt to make that negative into a fetich, and we must allow to other people the liberty to contradict our negatives in practice. We must be willing to surrender our negatives in so far as that does not sacrifice love to Christ and the brethren. I am prepared to do it. A practical result, therefore, emerges, and that is, that in view of the evidence which has been presented to the Commission in view of the frank and free and full statement which has been made by brethren of these denominations, there is no barrier to organic union between the Congregationalists, the Presbyterians and the Methodists. That is a recommendation of a Commission which has given great thought and care and attention to this question of organic union, its possibilities and its difficulties, and surely we shall do something if this afternoon we give the imprimatur of this Congress its general approval to this general recommendation, and so enable the Continuation Committee to devise ways and means to carry this proposal into effect, and at the same time to gather together the other suggestions scattered here and there throughout the report. You will remember the word of John Knox when he was dying: "Read me a chapter from Holy Writ." They asked him which chapter. No one could accuse him of not being a fervent denominationalist. "Read me the seventeenth of John or a chapter from Ephesians,"—the two great chapters in Holy Writ which speak of Christian unity. And there was deep significance in that choice at that time. It meant that as the Scottish hero saint drew back from the things of earth and looked out upon life from the verge of eternity, a divided Christendom became unthinkable and intolerable.

REV. P. J. MURDOCH.—I shall make no replies. I shall not summarise the debate. I believe it is now complete. Anything that required replying to, I think, has been dealt with, and if there is anything else, it will be replied to in the report, which I commend to your notice. This debate has given me the very greatest pleasure, and I am quite sure the work of this Commission and the work we have done to-day as a Congress

has promoted the cause of reunion, I think more than anything that has taken place in this city before. I am quite sure it has done a very great deal for that end, and it remains that we proceed and do something more. A proposal will be laid before you for a Continuation Committee—that is one thing we can do. But there is another thing we can do. There are several things that will occur to people who have this matter at their hearts, I am sure. One thing that I intended to speak of this morning and neglected was this. I believe we ought to carry our desire for union now back to our various districts and make it a local thing. I am quite sure that we ought to ask ourselves to-night: "What can I do individually to promote union now in my own parish?" There is one thing I feel sure I can do, and will do, and that is to educate the people of my district by a manifested union, that is to say, by securing exchanges with any of my brethren of other denominations who wish to exchange with me. I believe a great deal more of that could be done and should be done, and that in that way we would popularise the idea of union.

Beside that, I hope a great many ministers here are going to speak next Sunday about this Congress, and I propose, for my own part, very soon to make some sort of report of this Congress, and indicate to the people the growing spirit of unity that this Congress has expressed. I feel that there is in our community, as evidenced by this Congress, a very rapidly-growing preference for organic union. Look towards that. Don't go away, and be done with it. Keep in mind such great catholic words as the Apostle Paul used: "All they that love the Lord Jesus Christ, all that call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." If we dwell upon such things, and look towards what surely must be their natural expression in a United Church, if we pray for these things, if we use whatever means come to our hands to promote this object, surely the day will come—it may be some way off yet, when there shall be that which we desire. I move that this Congress approve the general report.

REV. R. AMBROSE ROBERTS.—I second that, and would make three suggestions. Military men feel that they are brothers in arms, and never pass each other without coming to the salute. Ministers frequently pass each other in Melbourne with just a brief stare. If every member of this Congress, every ministerial member, would from this time forward, as he meets another member, just briefly recognise him, it would help to foster the spirit of brotherliness.

I have the honour of being the secretary of the Congregationalist Ministers' Fraternity. Every month we meet, and have very happy times. I believe there are other ministers' fraternal associations. If once in a quarter or once in six months we could forego our usual meeting and unite fraternally, I think a very excellent work could be done in that way.

We all have our anniversaries, Sunday School, Church anniversaries, etc., and we look about, as a rule, amongst the men of our own denomination in order to have them upon these special occasions. Perhaps, now, for the next twelve months we might make up our minds to ask our brethren from other denominations. In this way, I think a very practical step could be taken towards fostering this spirit of union.

I have lots of other suggestions, but will leave them till later on.

THE PRESIDENT put the motion to the meeting. Carried with acclamation.

MR. H. E. WOOTTON.—I beg to submit the following resolution:—

"This Congress desires to express its deep thankfulness to God for the manifest presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit in its deliberations, and resolves to appoint a Church Union Committee—

"(a) To further consider, mature, and take steps to give effect to the proposals already passed, taking into view the suggestions and criticisms voiced in Conference.

"(b) To carry on the work of investigation along the lines already laid down, and to extend the sphere of its enquiries so as to include Foreign Missions.

- "(c) To co-operate with the Churches and Missionary Societies in promoting unity and active co-operation, and
- "(d) To summon another Congress when the time seems ripe to help forward the cause of union, and hereby appoints the officers of this Congress, and the members of the three (3) Commissions as the Church Union Committee, with power to add."

In respect to that resolution I am carried back to the closing session of the World Missionary Conference when that great missionary statesman, Dr. Mott, remarked that we had not seen the tongue of fire nor heard nor felt the rushing, mighty wind. That was true of that Conference; so also it is true of this. I cannot help coupling with that the words of our Lord: "Blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed." We began our plans for the Congress with this goal in front of us, "One in a visible fellowship." No one of us dared anticipate that this consummation would be attained at this stage, but I do think we may take it as the sign and seal of God's blessing and approval, that the ultimate goal of union will be achieved. It has been shown that three great Churches—the Congregational, the Presbyterian, and the Methodist—may unite. I devoutly hope that no delay will take place which will prevent negotiations being carried on between those Churches, and that degree of unity achieved before long. I want to say, also, that our visions of unity have been immensely enlarged. I pay my tribute of affection and profound respect to the men who have been associated with me in the promotion of this Congress, to the leaders of the Churches—their true leaders—to Canon Hart, for that wonderful service which he conducted, which, I confess, gave me a vision of the priestly office not previously possessed. I say that our vision of union has been immensely enlarged, but, as a practical man, and in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, I also say, let us begin with the thing that lies at hand. Here, in this Commission's report, is this recommendation, unqualified, that these three Churches may commence that movement towards union which will lead us out to the full consummation. I was privileged to have some conversation with Lord Balfour, the President of the World Missionary Conference, and I well remember this remark that he made among others: "Some graves will have to be dug before union is achieved." I have never forgotten that remark. Christian men, Christian women, let us pray and labour that union be achieved before you and I are laid to rest.

MR. J. M. CAMPBELL.—I have been asked to second the motion, and I do so with great pleasure. I have been a member of the Committee of the Presbyterian Church which has been working towards union, but that movement seems rather to be hanging fire, and I think the effect of this Congress will be to give it new life and to push it on, I hope, to completion. This Congress has also had this effect. The negotiations which previously took place were almost in private, very little or none of them outside, but the effect of this Congress has been to bring the movement before the general public. We have had good reports in the newspapers, and you must remember that it is not enough for the leaders in the Churches to take up this movement; they must have the rank and file behind them. They cannot unite of themselves, unless the people generally are willing to come into union. I hope the laity will take this movement up and will look at it from a business point of view, as well as from a religious point of view, and see that all this waste of energy and money is put an end to, and that there shall no longer be any division of feeling and jealousy between denominations, but that all shall work together in the great common Name.

REV. W. H. FITCHETT.—It has been my misfortune not to have been

able to attend these meetings. This thing will make history. We shall never in all our Churches be the same after this Congress. It has made visible and audible a movement under the surface of which we ourselves were unconscious. But I think that resolution is inadequate. We are not going to unite the Churches; the Churches must unite themselves; they must frame the conditions of union. The next step will be to send to them our report, the best bit of Christian literature I have seen in Australia yet. We have not power to speak for them, but we can send them information of the greatest value, weighted with our approval, and then the Churches will act. We have been seeking for union for years. We did come to a point very near it, but the position now is that the Anglican Church has come into the negotiations. I would suggest that the Continuation Committee prepare an address, saying that with great respect we submit the information we have gathered—to keep it to ourselves is to waste it. I hope Mr. Wootton will add to his resolution that the report is to go to the Churches we represent.

THE PRESIDENT.—Mr. Wootton is prepared to add that to his resolution.

A VOICE.—May I ask for something to be done to carry this movement into the country districts?

THE PRESIDENT.—The Council will consider that one of the steps of the work they are to undertake, and any suggestions of that kind may be sent to Mr. Wootton. They will have the complete consideration of the Council. We have been sending progress reports of what we have been doing to the sister States, and they have been very much interested. I will now put the motion to the meeting. Carried.

PRESIDENT'S ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.—This great Church has become a sort of common meeting ground for Churches. Some of us almost feel as if we had the right to come in just as we please. We are under great obligations to the courtesy and kindness for the Rev. Leyton Richards and his deacons here for putting at our disposal these premises. The advantages they have given us have helped us materially to come to the happy settlement of the work we are doing. We have had the use of their rooms right through the many months we have met. Without putting it formally, we convey to the Rev. Leyton Richards and his deacons our sincere appreciation of the help they have rendered us by the use of these premises. (Applause).

MR. H. E. WOOTTON.—We want to express our thanks to the press. When waited upon some time ago, the editors of both "The Argus" and "The Age" expressed their hearty willingness to give publicity to our proceedings. They have done that right nobly, and I think it is becoming in us that we should acknowledge it. We should also thank the denominational press, which has made the meetings of this Congress so widely known throughout the Churches. I want also to thank Mr. Humphries, of "The Herald." You are all familiar with the Monday page of "The Herald," which gives so much interesting information about Church matters. (Applause).

THE PRESIDENT.—With reference to the financial position of this Congress, Mr. Birtchnell will make a statement which will help you to an understanding.

MR. JAMES BIRTCHELL.—Meetings such as have been held this week cannot be managed without incurring expense. Fortunately, the matter of finance has been pushed into the background. I have not been allowed to make any personal appeal, or ask anybody to contribute towards the expenses of the Congress, but it seems right to put before the members the position.

The cost of the three editions of "The Forerunner" is about	£100
Postages	25
Rent of Halls	50
Sundries, say	25
or thereabouts.	£200

Receipts to date	£73 10 0	
Contribution promised	50 0 0	
		£123 10 0
Leaving a balance of	£76 10 0	

A statement will be sent to every member of the Congress when the meetings are over. There is a guarantor behind this, and there have been no paid services in connection with the Congress. I shall be pleased to receive contributions if anyone wishes to make them. Surely we can say with David: "Neither will I offer unto the Lord my God of that which costs me nothing."

REV. F. C. SPURR.—We owe this Congress to the initiative of Mr. Wootton, and I do not think we have expressed our indebtedness to him. I think we ought to thank him from the bottom of our hearts, and I propose we do so.

THE PRESIDENT.—My own feeling is the same. We are all disposed to carry our expression of thanks to God for giving us in this city a leader of this movement like Mr. H. E. Wootton. God has been preparing His servant for this work. We, as his brethren, ought to say to him in no uncertain voice that we do thank God for his work and his leadership, and we pray God that this great joy may be given him, to see some great consummation of it in our city and in our land.

Carried with acclamation.

A hearty vote of thanks to the President, Rev. A. McCallum, for his able conduct of the meetings of the Congress was proposed by Rev. W. S. Rolland, seconded by Rev. Leyton Richards.

Carried with acclamation.

UNITED MISSION SERVICE, AUDITORIUM.

THURSDAY EVENING, 4TH SEPTEMBER, 1913.

The Rev. Dr. Rentoul occupied the chair, and the meeting opened with a hymn, followed by a Bible lesson, read by the Rev. J. Thomas, and prayer led by the Rev. A. R. Ebbs.

DR. RENTOUL.—I have come this evening, in addition to my desire to do honour to our generous host, Mr. Wootton, for two reasons, first because I wish to emphasise the continuity of the Presbyterian Church, and of the Presbyterian ministry, if it were for nothing else than because of the very disparity there is, and, secondly, because if some people could have their way, apparently very soon we should be all crushed into external unity of one Church—then, I suppose, Moderators would be no more, and, therefore, I take it to be a wise thing for Moderators to use the few opportunities that remain to them. I shall try to be brief, not because the President no longer presides over me, but for the reason that there are two interesting men who have offered to speak to you to-night, the one freshly back from the islands of the sea, a son of the late and sainted John G. Paton, and the other, our noted friend, who has already done good work in China—Dr. Stuckey, from Peking.

But I want to say three of four things, and the first is that already

on the Mission Field we have solved the problem of overlapping in a distinct and victorious way. Take those Islands of the Sea—long ago, God's wise men, whose hearts were touched with the romance of the Mission of the Christ, arranged those Islands into four divisions, and there has been no trouble ever since. To the Church of England was assigned, under the Church Missionaries' Society, portions of Melanesia and various other islands; to the Presbyterians was assigned the New Hebrides; to the London Missionary Society was assigned part of New Guinea North, and the Methodists were assigned Fiji and its adjacent islands, where they have done such notable work. In the spirit that is demanded by the spirit of Christ this problem has been solved—namely, the spirit of not looking merely each on our own interests, but all looking to the interests of others; consequently, this Mission of the Christians to foreign lands, in the spirit of the first great man who was Christ's Missionary to Europe, the Apostle St. Paul has proven the vindication not only of itself, but also of Christianity at home. Wherever any man doubts that Christ is living still, that the Syrian stars do not look down upon His grave, as in Matthew Arnold's marvellous book, but that He lives, he has only to look at the foreign Mission-field. Sir H. H. Johnstone, who went to Africa not believing in Missions at all, wrote some of the most warm and much-treasured words in praise of the Christian Mission, its usefulness, and its higher reason. So it is always in India and elsewhere where God's Missionaries in the name of Jesus Christ make such splendid history. And I suppose none of our Churches can boast over the other, and yet an eminent historian has said that a fourth part of the Mission work done is done by the British and American Presbyterians, but the Presbyterians cannot boast over others. Think of the great work done by the Church Missionary Society. Think, again, of the wide-spread work done by the London Missionary Society under the auspices of the great forces of Congregationalism in England; where shall we turn for examples more splendid, more heart thrilling, more calling upon all the forces of admiration in the human soul, than when you look at the Missionaries sent forth by the great London Missionary Society. Robert Moffatt, in South Africa, and his great son-in-law, David Livingstone—the London Missionary Society has the great honour of having found them out. And the Rev. Chalmers, of New Guinea, whom all men who knew anything of Missions loved, just as his own black man loved him; and all the rest. Somebody said to-day that divisions, which I call splendid forces of diversity amidst the unity of Christendom, were rather of the devil than Christ, but who can believe that nonsense who thinks of that great gathering when England was sunk in spiritual darkness, and yet that some would call a debasing movement, led by Charles Wesley and John Wesley; it has shaken the world and thrilled all souls, and the results and agencies of it are in all our hearts, and the energies of it no man can measure. Then look at the Baptist force, that "died like flies," said Stanley, of those pioneers, and that ventured up the Congo River, and did not know how to save themselves. They saved others, themselves they could not save, but they died like heroes; and think of all the rest. By the way, I may mention that there is a Missionary who has penetrated into South America, and to the place where that 40,000 Indians were done to dreadful death by those cruel rubber financiers; he has reached that great River, and is already working at the source of it. This is portion of the Missionary movement of the Christians, and they give a splendid lot of encouragement to our hearts. I want to think for a moment of what the world might be were it not for Christians. St. Paul came long ago into Europe with all its seemingly eternal power of material force; he came with no visible sword to fight against spiritual darkness in high places, and look at the result. Every progressive nation to-day is Christian, it has Christ in its mind, and the influence of Christ in its energies and its traffic, more and more sweetening and trying to purify them, and

guiding forward the higher forces of thought in mankind, and if it were not for Christ it would all be a dreadful darkness under the forces of materialism. Glorious as the nineteenth century was for the expansion of the Foreign Missions, let us take care that the twentieth century is not a century of contraction, because it is a sad fact, as many indications prove to us, that amidst the wondrous output of wealth in England, Scotland, America and Germany to-day, there is a wondrous growth of selfishness; a wondrous expenditure of money and means upon sheer physical pleasure, upon getting quicker from place to place in the rush of physical enjoyment, and the forces that make for the higher unselfishness are getting to be forgotten. We were startled and rather dashed some months ago by learning that these great Missionary Societies had their forces of war dwindled; that the Church Missionary Society had a deficit of £29,000, and the Methodists also had a big deficit; but to their honour, they have gathered together and cleared it off. The London Missionary Society had a big deficit, and I do not know what is the condition of the funds of the Presbyterian Mission Societies and Churches, nothing has been said about it, and I suppose they have not got into slack water yet. In my father's house there was an institution, and it is what I remember more than anything else in that old home: Each of us had what was called a Mission box, and in each Mission box there was a hole that nothing bigger than a penny could get into, and I remember very accurately that boys, and even girls, have some very shrewd modes of getting into their mother's jam press, although it was locked, but whatever box or cupboard we went into, we had a sacred feeling towards going into the Mission boxes; we thought it was uncanny if anyone interfered with it. I wish we could bring back that old institution, as well as religion in the home, and study of God's word in the home, and the prayers going up from bended knees in the home. Brethren, you are letting your children forget about the Mission boxes. Get the boys to make them themselves, and to make the hole as narrow as possible, and train up your children with an enthusiasm for Christ's missions in the foreign lands, and then you will have enthusiasm for Home Mission; then your Churches will no longer need to complain about empty pews; and you will get splendid enthusiastic workers.

DR. E. J. STUCKEY (Peking, China).—Mr. Chairman, Christian friends,—I have been asked to speak to-night on the subject of union in China. We have been having during these past few days a series of most interesting gatherings. As we have met together and talked together on this burning question of unity, we have felt in a very remarkable way drawn together and inspired and helped. I am here this evening to say that in China the question of union is also the burning question of the day. Whatever you may call disunion work here in the Homeland—you may call it a mistake, a waste of energy, etc.—but I stand here to say that on the Mission-field we call it sin. I do not see how anyone face to face with the tremendous needs of heathenism can call disunion amongst the Missionary Societies by any milder term. I wish to-night to speak chiefly of what I myself have seen in North China. You will remember in 1900 that terrible Boxer outrage swept over China, and the Mission work in Peking and other parts was swept away, and the Missionaries had to flee. When they returned to work, the first problem that presented itself was—Shall we begin to work as we were before, which means planting a School here with a doctor, and training a few medical assistants, and doing the same in a number of other places, and I am glad to say that when they met, after all their work had been swept away, they said, "No, let us establish one good Medical College, one good Arts College for boys and one for girls; one first-class Theological Hall, and let us all unite in these institutions." There was a scheme drawn up which would have practically united the whole of the Missions working in Peking, but I am sorry to say that that scheme was turned down by

several of the Home Boards, and as a result we had to be satisfied with a smaller union; but the London Missionary Society, the American Board, and the American Presbyterian Society united in North China Union. The London Missionary Society said we will establish and equip a Medical College; the American Board said we will establish and equip an Arts College for boys and girls, and the American Presbyterian Society established and equipped the Theological College, and each Society will send teachers to each of those institutions. Each Society has equal representation on the Board of Management, and the Home Societies have the right to veto on the action of the Board of Management on the field, but it has scarcely ever been exercised. I am also glad to say that since the Medical College, with which my own Society is specially connected, was opened, three other Societies have joined in that Union, so that we now have three British Societies and three American Societies uniting; and there is another Society, Canadian, which is wanting to come into full union, so that we have two Independent Societies, two Presbyterians, a Methodist Society, the S.P.G., Anglican, and the London Medical Missionary Society, uniting in that College. We are prepared to go further than that; when I left they were discussing plans for a union of the Christian University in Peking, which would unite all the higher education of the Missions in North China. That is one example. At the same time that the Missionaries were discussing the educational problem, they also said, can we not go further and send out a circular to all the Missionaries in China, asking these four questions:—1. Would you approve the preparation of a union Hymnal? 2. Would you approve the adoption of a common designation for Churches and preaching places? 3. Would you be in favour of a universal word for God and the Holy Spirit; and 4. Would you be in favour of the federation of all the Protestant Churches in China? You will see that we have some problems that you do not have here at home.

After some years of correspondence and scores of conferences, in 1905 a Union Conference was held in Peking. It was the first Conference that I attended after we landed in China, and I felt it was an inspiration to be present right at the outset of my Missionary career. At that Conference it was decided to prepare the Union Hymn book, a small collection of 150 hymns for common use, and as a beginning towards the preparation of a Union Hymnal. It was also decided, in order that there might be no confusion in the minds of the heathen, that Churches where congregations gathered on Sundays should be called Worship Halls, and the street preaching Chapels should be called Gospel Halls. If you go through Peking, and can read Chinese, you will see these names appearing in Chinese, and we only put up in English the names of our denominations. There is nothing in Chinese to show that this is a London Mission; we simply stand together in calling our Churches and street preaching chapels by the one common designation.

It was also found possible to decide to use one term for God and one term for the Holy Spirit, and in that way the division that had existed has been practically done away with, and when the present generation dies out I think that will be the last we shall hear on the Mission-field of that unhappy division.

As a result of that Conference, it was decided to form Federal Councils in each Province for the purpose of uniting in closer work the various Societies working in these provinces, and now in China, in all but two provinces of the Empire, there are either Federation Councils, or similar bodies at work, whose chief object is to draw the Societies closer together, to see that there is no overlapping, to arrange territory, and to see that in educational and other work there shall be union. Just recently, in connection with the Continuation Committee of the Edinburgh Conference, Dr. Mott has been travelling through China. There were five Conferences, and afterwards one national one held in Shanghai, and the

great burden of all the reports was a desire and a plea for more unity; and as I have been reading the results of the Conference in Shanghai, I think it is one of the most inspiring things I have read since I went to the Mission-field. In the report on the subject of the Chinese Church, there is evidence that it is tending almost inevitably towards organic union, and whether it is possible in our home land or not, I think it is not too much to say, that, provided the Chinese are not hindered by Western Missionaries, and by the present state of opinion in our Western Churches, they will go almost inevitably towards organic union amongst the Churches in China. And they have discussed the use of a single term for all those who call themselves Christians in China. They are strongly in favour of Federation; they wish for the preparation of a Union Hymn book; they wish for the preparation of a union book of prayers for use in public worship, and then they pleaded for fresh study of the differences that divide us, and for constant prayer that they might be guided towards unity; and I think one of the most significant statements, and one which I felt almost ashamed to see in a report of a commission like this, was—“Whereas co-operation between the Missionary bodies working on the field is rendered almost impossible without the sanction of the Home Boards, the Conference recommends that the China Continuation Committee should endeavour to bring about a greater measure of co-operation between the Mission Boards at home.” The Chinese have looked on with a kind of mute bewilderment in their eyes, and then asked—“Why is it necessary to ask such a thing?” I would just like to say that in China every experiment we have made in the way of union and federation and co-operation has created, and is creating a demand for further union and closer co-operation in our work. In the next place we find that we must begin with what is immediately practical. While we may recognise the differences that divide us, and the difficulties in the way of further union, yet it is possible to make a beginning, and so we have already begun on what is immediately practical, in the hope that as we come closer together, these differences that separate us shall begin to disappear, and we shall find that the differences are not so great as we thought.

The greater the power of the Chinese in our Missions, the greater the responsibility they have, and the greater opportunity they have of expressing their opinions, the more they urge us towards union; and as I have already said, the tendency of the Chinese is towards one united Church in China, and I think it will always be that the Mission-field will be ahead of the Home-field in the matter of union, and I do pray that we here at home, by our divisions and disunion, may not hinder the coming of the Kingdom of our Master in the foreign-fields. It is a sad thing that we should be hampered or hindered by any division or any disunion amongst the Missionary Societies at the Home end.

I feel it a great privilege to thus speak on behalf of the land which I have come to love, and before which I believe there is a great future, and the more I see of China and the wonderful change that is coming over that land, the more I am coming to feel that either we must quickly win that great land for Christ, or else it will become a race of materialistic agnostics, and you and I have to bear our parts in winning this land. If we unitedly give ourselves more devoutly to this great cause, I believe it is possible that in the next ten, twenty or thirty years we may see that great land of China come to the feet of the Master.

REV. F. H. L. PATON.—Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen,—All through Christ's ministry Jesus was continually emphasising the fact that to be his followers meant to love in the same true sense as He loved, and to give the love in the same true sense as He gave His for the winning of the world back to God, and in His closing words again and again He linked together His great Mission which he handed on to his disciples, with the promise of His presence, and the promise of His spirit. Matthew tells us that when handing on this work to His disciples, he promised—

"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." And John tells us that when handing on this mission to His disciples He breathed on them, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit"; and Luke tells us that when promising to His disciples the power of the Holy Spirit, He linked on to it the command—"and ye shall be my witness." Nearly nineteen hundred years afterwards a great gathering came together at Edinburgh from all parts of the world: wherever Jesus was known and worshipped from there came men and women to confer together about this great task that Jesus had committed to His followers so long ago, and which was yet so far from being accomplished, and among the many things that were deliberated and decided by that great Conference at Edinburgh in 1910, two things stand out distinct and clear: First, the unanimous decision of that great Council that Missions are the supreme business of the Church of Jesus Christ; and, secondly, that this decade in which we are now living is the great crisis decade of the world's history. Now, a great Conference like that could not possibly make such tremendous declarations without having a good reason behind it, and we can easily see some of the reasons as we consider the great world movements of God's Spirit that have been bringing about such momentous changes throughout the world. For example, we see one of the reasons that led the Edinburgh Conference to this. Conviction is the great world consciousness that the Church is a world-wide mission, and that the Church can only get power to do its work at home as it widens its outlook, until it is as wide as the outlook of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. We see it also in the rise and spread of that greatest of all Missionary Societies, the British and Foreign Bible Society, that is sending the Word of God far and wide throughout the whole world, and without which no Missionary could do his work of evangelising the world. Again, we see the reason for this conviction in the opening of doors throughout the whole world. It is not so long ago that in any gathering of men and women in connection with the Missionary movement, one of the most earnest petitions that arose from the hearts of those present was that God would open the doors. That petition is never heard now, because the doors have been flung wide open; because God has raised up men and women, like David Livingstone and Robert Morrison and others, who first opened these doors, until to-day we may send the Gospel of Jesus Christ, either by the living voice, or by the written word, into every part of the world; and surely when God awakens in the heart of the Church the great world consciousness like this, we must believe that He is calling us to enter through those doors, and to keep that world in the name of Jesus. Then there is a third reason, and that is because God has aroused within our own generation a great movement among the Universities, among the men and women, who through their training are the better fitted to carry the Gospel through the whole world, and that movement, which began in 1886, in the gathering together of a little group of students, who had given their lives for the foreign service of Jesus Christ, has spread through the Universities, until six thousand of the students have sailed, and are at work in the front, and four thousand more are still preparing in the Universities. Out of that number three hundred have volunteered in our Australian Universities; but that is only one outcome of this movement. Through the challenge of the students volunteering the Church has been aroused to face, and is facing, and is becoming convinced of the truth that it is possible to evangelise the whole world in this generation, and that the measure of the Church's responsibility is the measure of the possibilities that God has set before it. And not only has the volunteer movement aroused the Church to a sense of its obligation, but it has brought God's power into the University itself. This movement brought together in America, just the other day, the most representative gathering that has ever taken place, and Dr. Mott writes that it is the greatest in the history of the Student movement, and likely

to be fraught with tremendous results for the progress of the Christian movement among the Universities of the world. Surely when God puts these thoughts into our hearts, and opens the doors, and rouses the students, the flower of our young manhood and womanhood, we cannot for one moment doubt that God is specially calling to this generation to go forward and win the world in the name of Jesus.

There is still another reason, and that is the fact that all over the world, as a result of the prayers of God's Church and of the Church's Missionaries, there has come about a state of unrest all over the world—everywhere the world is seething with unrest. Nations that have not moved for centuries have changed with an amazing rapidity, and everywhere throughout the world the old ways are passing, and hearts that were locked against all religions are opening up, and there is a readiness, such as there never has been in the history of the world, amongst all nations, to listen to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to weigh that message. Then, again, with this, we have God raising a new movement, a movement among men, among the mature manhood of the Church, among men who have made their mark in politics and commerce in the world—this goes by different names sometimes—The Laymen's Missionary Movement, or it may be called the Men and Religion Movement; but they are all manifestations of the same moving of God's spirit in the hearts of men, moving them to realise that upon them rests the responsibility of leadership, and so we have not only the students offering their lives, but we have the business and professional manhood of the Church offering their means that these students may be sent out to conquer the world for Jesus Christ. And we find a deep movement going on of the spirit of God among all classes of the community; we find men and women coming to a new realisation of what is involved in discipleship. We find this spirit of God especially along the line of Missionary appeal; we find it manifesting itself in the Conferences of Students and Church people, and Bible and Missionary Study Conferences and Schools, and everywhere we find men and women, and especially young men and women, coming face to face with Jesus Christ, and realising the necessity of dedicating their lives to Him and placing those lives at His disposal, that He may place them where they will work for the coming of His Kingdom, and use them for the indwelling of the Spirit of God for the winning of the world to God. And surely we must feel that God is calling us to a special movement, when we think of the spirit of unity and the yearning for closer union that is moving the hearts of men and women in all the Churches at the present time, and I believe that this Congress which has brought us together from all the Churches is but the manifestation of that movement of God's spirit seeking to bring us into closer touch, that we may co-operate more effectively for the winning of the whole world to Jesus Christ. That being so, I believe that God is summoning us to a great forward movement, both at home and abroad, and I believe that in proportion as we rise to that summons there will come upon us the presence of Jesus and His Holy Spirit; and in proportion as we attempt to launch out into the deep and go forward at Christ's command, we will be given a power that will work in and through us to the building up of Christ's Kingdom.

And so I believe that the present is a call for co-operation in the work of the Foreign Missions. We have heard from Dr. Stuckey about the wonderful measure of co-operation in China, and we know that in other parts of the world, while the Churches have not been in such close co-operation they have at least sought to minimise those difficulties. In the Pacific we have had a large measure of co-operation, as our Chairman has pointed out, through the delimitation of territory, and each Church keeping within the bounds which it has accepted. We have had a large measure of co-operation lately in the work among the Aborigines. For years that work was neglected, except by one or two Churches, but last

year the Churches came together in a Conference, and after a whole winter's work they came to a unanimous decision to delimit Australia. Now we thank God to-day that the Aborigines of Australia, who have lain so heavy upon the conscience of the Church, are at last to have the Gospel brought to them, and brought to them immediately; but we feel that the time is coming for a closer co-operation still. It is not sufficient that we have our different territories and work them independently, because in all these territories we come face to face with common problems and common difficulties, and why should we seek in isolated fashion to face these problems and to solve these difficulties? Why should we not come together and compare our methods, and learn by each other's success and each other's failures? I believe the time is coming when the Churches ought to face the position in the Pacific, and ought to have a great Conference, similar to this Congress of Union, which shall bring to light all the problems and difficulties that we encounter in the work of the Pacific, so that with united wisdom and experience we may help one another to solve such problems as the second generation—a far more difficult problem than the winning of the savage cannibals, because these young girls and boys, born into Christian homes, do not know the pit out of which their fathers have been dug, and they have to be won over again.

And the second problem—the new conditions—the inrush of white settlement, with its new methods of industry and its commercialism; the coming of great companies, whose whole outlook is trade and how they can get big dividends, and who do not ask—Are we securing these dividends in such a way as will make for the common good of the land to which we have come? And so they are bringing into these lands great armies of indent labour, and anyone who knows anything about indent labour must feel that whatever the value of it to capitalists, it is contrary to the Spirit of Jesus Christ. It is time we had a great Conference of business men to look into this thing and call it by its right name, and if we cannot get big dividends and show the face of Jesus Christ to the natives, then the dividends will have to go.

Then there is the problem of the white man—a difficult problem, and I do not know how it is going to be solved. You see, even the better class of white men often come more or less into collision with the Missionary, because the Missionary gives himself body and soul for the uplifting of the natives, and he has an outlook that is no wider than the good, spiritual and physical, of these people to whom he has come and given his life that he may uplift them into fellowship with God, and so he necessarily comes into conflict with the great bulk of white men. And yet they must be won for Jesus, just as surely as the black men. How are we going to reach them—I do not think any of us know; but if we could come together in a Conference, and compare the efforts we have made to reach them, we might be able to solve the problem.

Then there is the problem of dual control; that experiment has been tried since 1907, and after six years of trying we have no hesitation in saying that the Condominium which was framed by two great powers has developed into an instrument of tyranny and oppression to the black man and injustice to the Britisher. I had intended to speak about this to-night, but was asked to speak on the wider question, and only allude in passing to the condition of the Hebrides, but I think I can make you understand the position best by telling you of one incident. At the Island of Malokula the French Man of War suddenly arrived in the offing, sent a boat ashore, and arrested a young teacher, a beautiful soul called Judah. He looked around in amazement, not understanding why he was taken prisoner, and as the handcuffs were being put on his wrists he turned round to his friends, and in order to allay any danger of strong feeling, said—"You pray, and we will pray, Good-bye." He was taken in chains on the man-of-war to Vila, and put into prison. When I got to Vila by motor launch I asked permission to see Judah; the permission was granted,

but with three conditions attached. First, that an official of the French residency must be present at that visit; second, that all conversation must be carried on in pidgin English; third, that I must make no allusion to Judah's arrest; so I was practically gagged; but I had to accept these conditions. I began by expressing my brother's sympathy and my own, and immediately the Commissioner started up and frowned at me—I must not express sympathy. There were three French officials present. Feeling that the situation was utterly intolerable, because I had to stop Judah when he started to ask the reason of his arrest, I said—"Well, can I at least pray with the man?" The Commissioner did not answer, but the other two officials frowned at me, and I turned round and prayed with Judah to try and comfort him. As I went out I looked up and saw the British flag flying alongside that of the French, and I felt that if only all Britishers knew the conditions in force, they would rise as one man and insist upon justice being done.

I went to Mr. Jacomb, the lawyer whom Judah's friends had paid to represent him, and he said: "I cannot get to Judah, your only chance is to go to Dr. —, the Natives' Advocate, and ask him to get into touch with Judah on my behalf." I went, and said: "I want you to see Judah, the teacher who is under arrest in the French prison," and he said, "I cannot get to him." I said: "Do you mean to say that you, the Commissioner appointed by two Governments to defend the natives, cannot get to see Judah?" He said: "No, the French resident says this is a man-of-war case, and I am powerless."

I found out that the charge was one of assault on a Frenchman. Twelve months ago a Frenchman was going to shoot a native Malekulan for collecting cocoanuts on his own land. Judah got between them and persuaded the Frenchman not to shoot. He did not touch him in any way, but merely spoke to him, perhaps rather strongly. He saved the native's life, and for that he was arrested, and now lies in a French prison, against which the British flag flies.

We have been asked again and again not to appeal to the public opinion, which would embarrass the British Government in any negotiations with the French, but we have been told that so often that at last we have decided that the time has come when we must appeal to every Britisher. These facts are going to be proclaimed through the British world until we can bring such pressure to bear that it will strengthen the Government's hands in negotiating with the French, so that they will do justice to the Islanders.

I believe the present is a call to dedication such as never before has come to the Church of Jesus Christ. Christ's business requires that every Christian shall give his life to Jesus with an absolute surrender, which will enable Jesus to use that life either at home or abroad, either in the ministry or the Mission field, so that it will make for the coming of His Kingdom, and it is of little use our meeting together to talk about union with one another, unless we are prepared to so hold our lives up to Jesus Christ, so as to come into perfect union with Him, conscious of nothing but our oneness in Him, and the greatness of the work to which he has called us.

DR. RENTOUL.—We feel very grateful to Mr. Paton for his great and noble address, and also to Dr. Stuckey. I do not think this meeting should separate without expressing our gratefulness also towards our host, the real creator of this movement, Mr. Wootton; and also to our President, Mr. McCallum.

REV. JOSEPH KING.—I have exceeding pleasure in doing what I have been asked to do, namely, to move a vote of thanks to Mr. Wootton for his part in this most successful movement, and to our friend Mr. McCallum for having so ably presided over this Conference. We congratulate both in the great success which has attended the Congress so far. I could say a great deal about Mr. Wootton if there were time, as I have been very

intimately associated with him for about ten years past. I have known his first thoughts about this movement, and watched the evolution of the man in relation thereto. I have known the difficulties he has encountered, and see how he has been enabled to overcome them, and I may say that year after year my admiration of him has increased. We have been called very close to each other, and I have been moved exceedingly once or twice this week by the references which have been made to him and the success of the Congress.

REV. GEORGE TAIT.—Seconded this vote of thanks, and it was carried.

The Choir then rendered the Hallelujah Chorus, and the Benediction having been pronounced, the meeting closed.

